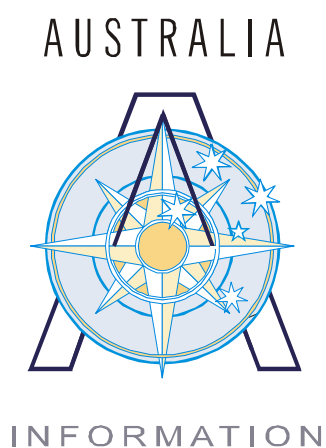
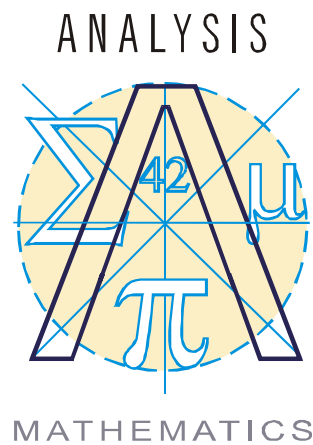


# Analysis of the 2005 Personal Safety Survey



June 2007

*Project: FACSIA/7*

## Analysis of the 2005 Personal Safety Survey

June 2007

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*This analysis report was prepared for the Department by Data Analysis Australia and does not reflect the views of the Minister or the Department.*

## **Executive Summary**

The Personal Safety Survey (PSS) was conducted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) in 2005 to collect information from a large sample (11,800 women and 4,500 men) about their experiences of violence. The survey covered a wide range of areas including physical and sexual violence, children witnessing domestic violence, reporting of violence to the police, and accessing of services. In 1996, the ABS conducted the Women's Safety Survey (WSS). The WSS collected information from approximately 6,300 women about their experiences of violence.

Data Analysis Australia was commissioned by Family and Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaCSIA) in 2007 to conduct a detailed analysis of the PSS data. The ABS provided a summary report on the results of the PSS in August 2006, however the wealth of data collected in the survey allows for further exploration of many aspects of violence in Australia. The present report focuses on the following areas:

- Summary of Violence in the Community
  - Demographics
  - Alcohol and Substance Use and Violence
  - Effects of Violence (Injuries and Changes to Life)
- Partner Violence
- Children and Violence
- Responses to Violence – Reporting and Seeking Help.

Comparisons are also made between the results of the PSS and the WSS. Not all the information gathered in the WSS is directly comparable to the PSS, due to differences in the wording of questions. The primary focus of the report is on women's experiences of violence, however men's experiences are also explored in some of the sections. The figures reported throughout the survey are ABS population estimates based on the survey sample results.

Key points of interest include:

### *Violence in the Community*

- In the twelve months prior to the PSS, 6% of women (443,800) and 11% of men (808,300) experienced violence.
- Violence against men and violence against women tend to have different characteristics. Both men and women are more likely to experience violence by a male perpetrator than a female perpetrator. Men are more

likely than women to experience physical assault, to experience violence by a stranger, and when serious injuries result from the assault, the perpetrator is usually a stranger. Women are more likely than men to experience sexual assault. Women are more likely to experience violence by a current or previous partner than men, and serious injuries resulting from violence are more likely to be caused by someone they know.

- Younger people were more likely to have experienced violence in the twelve months prior to the survey than older people.
- Alcohol and drugs were considered by respondents to have contributed to many of the incidents of violence. Alcohol and drug use was most often considered to contribute to violence when the incident involved a stranger (80% of physical assaults and 84% of sexual assaults by a stranger).

### *Injuries*

- Bruises were the most common form of injury received.
- More serious injuries (including fractures and broken bones, penetrative injuries/stabs/gunshots and miscarriages) are more common in the 18-24 year age group and the 45+ age groups.
- Women's serious injuries (fractures/broken bones, penetrative injuries, stabbings, shootings and miscarriages) were most often caused by an 'other known person' or a previous partner, with boyfriends/girlfriends/dates, strangers and current partners each also causing approximately 10-15% of serious injuries.

### *Impact on Life*

- Approximately one in three female sexual assault victims experienced changes in each of the following areas: eating/sleeping, home security, and social leisure activities as a result of fear or injuries caused by the violence.
- Approximately one in five women who experienced physical or sexual assault made changes to their work/studies as a result of fear or injuries caused by the violence.

### *Partner Violence*

- 160,118 women had experienced violence by their current partner, and 1,127,853 women had experienced violence by a previous partner.
- The percentage of women who had experienced violence by their current partner or previous partner increased with age, although this trend dropped off for women aged 55+.

- Violence by a previous partner was reported to be more frequent than violence by a current partner<sup>1</sup>.

#### *Children and Violence*

- In total, 956,602 (12%) female respondents had experienced sexual abuse before the age of 15 and 779,520 women (10%) experienced physical abuse before the age of 15.
- Partner violence was reported to be witnessed by children by over 400,000 women who had experienced previous partner violence, and over 50,000 women who had experienced violence by their current partner<sup>2</sup>.
- One quarter of all women who had experienced violence by a previous partner experienced violence during pregnancy.

#### *Accessing Services and Support*

- Violence was reported to the police by 28% of males and 32% of females who had experienced violence in the last year.
- 10% of women who had experienced current partner violence, and 25% of women who had experienced previous partner violence had taken out a restraining / violence order against a partner.
- Of women who had experienced current partner violence and taken out a restraining / violence order against their partner, 20% experienced further incidents of violence after the order was issued.
- Of women who had experienced previous partner violence and taken out a restraining / violence order against their partner, 42% experienced further incidents of violence after the order was issued.
- Friends / neighbours were the most common social supports for people who had experienced violence, with 63% (277,426) of female violence victims and 71% (575,977) male violence victims talking to friends/neighbours about the most recent incident of violence.
- More than 10% of men and women who experienced violence in the last twelve months did not talk to anyone about the violence.

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<sup>1</sup> 'Previous partners' includes partners who were current at the time of the violence but since separated.

<sup>2</sup> These results are derived from women who had children in their care when the violence occurred and stated that child/ren witnessed the violence. It does not reflect how many children witnessed violence (the incident may have been witnessed by more than one child), nor the children's own accounts of whether they witnessed violence.

- Seven percent of men and 19% of women who had experienced violence in the last twelve months sought professional help after the most recent incident of violence.
- Approximately 90% of women who had experienced sexual assault in the last twelve months did not access crisis support (90%), legal help (91%) or other support services including telephone help lines (91%).
- For women who had experienced physical assault in the last twelve months, legal help was the most common service used (11%).

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## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Background

Historically, the legal and community response to domestic violence and sexual assault has been far from adequate, with a tendency to minimise these offences and blame the victims (Mouzos & Makkai, 2004; OFW, 2001). As the majority of victims of both these types of crime are women, large research studies are tending to subsume both under the heading of violence against women. Since the 1970s, there have been major legal reforms and community awareness campaigns to improve community attitudes and service provision in response to violence to women (AIC, 2004). Although minority patterns of domestic violence and sexual assault (such as male victims of female perpetrators and same sex domestic violence) should not be minimised, there is still much to be done to address public attitudes and legal and service responses to the more widespread issue of violence against women (AIC, 2004).

The collection of statistical data about the incidence and prevalence of violence is an important step in understanding the extent of violence in our communities, informing policy decisions, and measuring changes that may occur. Between 1996 and 2006, there have been several major surveys collecting data on violence against women:

The Women's Safety Survey 1996 was funded through the then Office for the Status of Women and the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) to assess the nature and extent of violence against women in Australia and their sense of safety at home and in the community. Approximately 6,300 women participated in the survey.

As part of an international research effort, the Australian Institute of Criminology conducted the Australian component of the International Violence Against Women Survey (IVAWS) that included information from 6,677 Australian women.

The World Health Organisation collected data about domestic violence from over 24,000 women in 10 countries in the Multi-Country Study on Women's Health and Domestic Violence. Although not an Australian study, it provides information about the prevalence of domestic violence internationally.

In 2004 the Australian Government, through the Office for Women, commissioned the ABS to conduct the Personal Safety Survey 2005 (PSS) to provide data on women's experiences of different types of violence. The ABS conducted the survey work and for the first time funded a component on men's experience of violence. The sample involved approximately 11,800 women and 4,500 men. The ABS released the PSS results in a summary publication in August 2006.

The present report analyses data from the 2005 PSS with a focus on the issue of violence against women, and makes comparisons to the 1996 WSS survey data.

Although not all questions in the PSS are the same as in the WSS, there are areas of consistency that allow comparisons to be made. This is an important step forward in measuring violence in Australia, as differing research methods and definitions have severely limited comparability between studies previously. Extensive data was collected in the surveys. This report focuses on several key areas:

- Summary of Violence in the Community
  - Demographics
  - Alcohol and Substance Use and Violence
  - Effects of Violence (Injuries and Changes to Life)
- Partner Violence
- Children and Violence
- Responses to Violence – Reporting and Seeking Help.

It is widely acknowledged that information about the true extent of violence against women is difficult to gauge, as people who have experienced family violence or sexual assaults often do not report violence to the police or access services. Although surveys gather information from many women who have experienced violence not recorded by police or service providers, it is not known how many women who have experienced violence choose not to participate in surveys or not to disclose information about the violence. Furthermore, some of the high risk groups for violence (including people who are homeless, in refuges or prisons at the time of the survey, and people living in remote Indigenous communities) are difficult to access and tend to be excluded from large scale surveys (including the PSS and WSS).

## 1.2 Definition of Terms<sup>3</sup>

*Violence* is defined in the PSS as any incident involving the occurrence, attempt or threat of either physical or sexual assault. *Physical assault* involves the use of physical force with the intent to harm or frighten. *Physical attempt or threat* is only included if a person believes it is likely to be carried out. *Sexual assault* includes acts of a sexual nature carried out against a person's will through the use of physical force, intimidation or coercion, or any attempts to do this. Unwanted sexual touching is excluded from sexual assault. *Sexual threat* involves the threat of an act of a sexual nature which the person believes is likely to be carried out.

It is important to note the meanings of the terms *current partner violence* and *previous partner violence*. Current or previous refers to the status of the relationship, not the status of the violence. Thus *current partner violence* refers to violence by a current partner (which may have occurred in the past or recently). *Previous partner violence* refers to violence by a previous partner (again, the

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<sup>3</sup> These definitions are directly quoted or adapted from the ABS Personal Safety Survey Cat. No. 4906.0.

violence may be in the past or still occurring). Previous partner violence includes violence by a partner who was a current partner at the time of the violence but has since separated from the respondent, or violence by a partner who was a previous partner at the time of the violence.

For full details of the PSS terminology refer to the ABS Personal Safety Survey Cat. No. 4906.0.

### 1.3 Survey Methodology

The PSS was conducted by the ABS between August and December 2005. The data was collected using face-to-face interviews with approximately 11,800 women and 4,500 men aged 18 years and over about experiences of violence since the age of 15, and experiences of child abuse before the age of 15. Reported figures are ABS population estimates based on the survey responses. For full details of the ABS methodology, refer to the ABS Personal Safety Survey Cat. No. 4906.0.

The WSS was conducted by the ABS between February and April 1996. The data was collected using face-to-face interviews with approximately 6,300 women aged 18 years and over about experiences of violence since the age of 15, and collected similar information to that collected in the 2005 PSS. Reported figures are ABS population estimates based on the survey responses. For full details of the ABS methodology, refer to the ABS Women's Safety Australia publication, Cat. No. 4128.0.

### 1.4 Survey Analysis

#### 1.4.1 2005 Personal Safety Survey

The 2005 PSS was analysed via the ABS' Remote Access Data Laboratory (RADL). The RADL is an on-line, batch mode query system that supports access to ABS Confidentialised Unit Record Files (CURFS). CURFS provided unit level responses to ABS surveys, however to maintain confidentiality of respondents, all records are de-identified (names and other identifying information are removed), a small number of records are perturbed (slightly altered) and very unusual records are removed.

The 2005 PSS data on the RADL consisted of five datasets:

1. Person – information on demographics of each individual in the survey including their survey weight (1 record per person).
2. Abuse – information on experiences of abuse before the age of 15 years. Experiences of abuse were separated into sexual abuse and physical abuse, with a separate record for each type of abuse. An indicator variable was included in each record to identify whether that type of abuse has been experienced (2 records per person).

3. Harassment – information on experiences of various forms of harassment. Harassment was separated into 4 types and separated by the gender of the perpetrator, with a separate record for each combination. An indicator variable was included in each record to identify whether that type of harassment has been experienced (4 x 2 = 8 records per person).
4. Partner – additional information from respondents who experienced violence by a partner. Partners were separated into current partner and previous partner. An indicator variable was included in each record to identify whether violence had been experienced by each type of partner (current or previous) (2 records per person).
5. Stalking – information on most recent incidents of stalking by a man or a woman. An indicator variable was included in each record to identify whether stalking had been experienced by each gender (2 records per person).
6. Violence – information on experiences of physical and sexual violence (broken down by assault and attempted/threatened assault), by five perpetrator types (current partner, previous partner, boyfriend/girlfriend/date, other known person, stranger), by sex of perpetrator. An indicator variable was included in each record to identify whether that type of violence had been experienced by each relationship to the perpetrator by each gender (4 x 5 x 2 = 40 records per person).

The analysis consisted of interrogating the appropriate datasets for each table produced. The indicator variable included in each dataset was used to scope out the respondents who had not experienced that particular type of abuse/harassment/stalking/violence, ensuring that only those who did experience that type of abuse/harassment/stalking/violence were included in the results.

Due to the way the data was structured, respondents could have experienced more than one type of abuse/harassment/stalking/violence in each table. Therefore, simply aggregating all records in the table would lead to double counting of some respondents. To overcome this, only *distinct* records for each classification for each respondent were included in the tables produced. Thus, the correct totals are provided for each individual table. However, totals in one table may not necessarily be equal to totals in another table. Also, rows and columns within a table cannot always be simply added together to form their own totals, as this could introduce duplication as the same respondent could be contributing to more than one cell in a table. This is a critical consideration when analysing the data, as otherwise incorrect results and interpretations will arise.

To demonstrate via example, assume that a respondent has experienced the following types of violence:

- Physical assault by a current partner who is male;
- Physical assault by a stranger who is male; and
- Physical threat by a stranger who is female.

This respondent would then be counted the following number of times depending on the analysis undertaken. For example:

- Whether experienced violence (contribute 1 time);
- Whether experienced violence by type of violence (contribute 2 times – once for physical assault, and once for physical threat);
- Whether experienced violence by type of perpetrator (contribute 2 times – once for current partner and once for stranger);
- Whether experienced violence by type of violence by type of perpetrator (contribute 3 times – once for physical assault by a current partner, once for physical assault by a stranger and once for physical threat by a stranger).

As a result of this, totals in different tables may not match. Also, numbers in rows and columns of a table cannot be summed in order to generate table totals.

#### 1.4.2 1996 Women's Safety Survey

The 1996 WSS data was also available via the ABS' RADL. However, this data was actually based on the confidentialised unit record file that had previously been available for purchase, outside the RADL. As such, significantly more processing of this file had been undertaken in order to ensure its confidentiality when released as a unit record file (rather than simply being accessed in batch mode through the ABS secure website). This processing included perturbing data items, removing some records completely and removing a number of fields<sup>4</sup>. As such, the results that could be generated by the CURF are exposed to a higher degree of error than those that could be generated from the 'real' data and the exclusion of some fields meant that a number of desired analyses could not be undertaken.

Therefore, instead of using the data available from the RADL, the required tables for analysis were taken directly from the ABS' published report ("Women's Safety Australia 1996", Catalogue Number 4128.0).

### 1.5 Quality Assurance

The analysis was undertaken in the statistical package SAS. All programming, data extraction and table generation was undertaken by experienced and qualified statisticians. The tables were generated by programming a series of SAS macros that were tested thoroughly for correctness before table generation commenced.

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<sup>4</sup> The technical paper for the CURF states: "To further ensure confidentiality and suppress identification of States and Territories, and the ability to cross reference data to official police records, steps were taken to "disguise" potentially identifiable records. This disguising exercise introduced a degree of perturbation into the data. Many attributes of the data released on the CURF will therefore, not match with published data. The degree of change from original survey findings which was caused by this "disguising" is minimal. Resultant figures, in all cases, stand up well against the original survey data. In the majority of items where there has been change, the degree is less than 1% of original survey data, and statistically may well have been the findings of the survey."

One aspect of the testing for correctness was comparing the outputs for a series of tables to those published by the ABS and ensuring that the results were the same. All data tables were produced by running these SAS macros with the relevant variables included as inputs. The generation of tables in this manner ensures that all tables are generated in a consistent manner which greatly reduces the chance of an error occurring. As inputs, the SAS macros required the variables that were being analysed for each table, as well as any scoping conditions for the table (for example, restricting the table to female respondents only). The output of the tables included the variable names used in the analysis and in the scoping to ensure that all outputs were reported on appropriately, with no misinterpretation of what the figures actually represent.

One complexity with the data is that some questions are ‘skipped’ based on responses to a previous question. The correct analysis of results requires that these skips are fully considered when interpreting the results and that the exact wording and intent of the questions are considered in the subsequent interpretation of the results. This was ensured for the 2005 PSS by cross referencing to the paper based survey in the both the table generation and reporting phases.

The questionnaire was not available for the 1996 WSS so this cross-checking was not possible. Instead, a thorough examination was undertaken of all the variables included in the dataset and a comparison of the resulting tables to published survey results was performed to ensure that the correct interpretation was placed on the tables taken from the ABS’ published report (“Women’s Safety Australia 1996”, Catalogue Number 4128.0). The generated figures for the 1996 WSS could not exactly replicate the published figures due to the processes and perturbation of data performed by the ABS in generating the CURF. However, the numbers were within the bounds expected as a result of the perturbation (around 1% difference in results) to provide confidence that the analysis was correct.

All tables were also individually examined for reasonableness. This is an important tool in the quality assurance of results as unreasonable results can be double checked and corrected before publication.

## 1.6 Technical Note – Accuracy of Estimates

The results presented in this report are based upon two sample surveys conducted by the ABS. Any estimates from a sample survey have a potential variability or uncertainty since if the survey was repeated, a different random sample would be accessed and hence by random chance the estimates would be different. The larger the sample size contributing to an estimate the smaller the variability will be.

The ABS publications presenting the survey results provide full descriptions of the survey sampling errors and the reader is referred to these for details. However a short summary of the standard errors associated with the two surveys is provided in the table below:

Estimate	1996 Female	2005 Male	2005 Female	Difference 1996-2005
FACSA/7		Report - June 2007		6

(Ref: C:\Documents and Settings\trionz\Desktop\5077905\_1.DOC)

	Females							
	SE	RSE	SE	RSE	SE	RSE	SE	RSE
1500	1070	71.3%	1180	78.7%	960	64%	1438	95.8%
2000	1300	65.0%	1450	72.5%	1140	57%	1729	86.5%
3000	1690	56.3%	1950	65.0%	1450	48%	2227	74.2%
5000	2340	46.8%	2750	55.0%	2000	40%	3078	61.6%
10000	3540	35.4%	4350	43.5%	2950	30%	4608	46.1%
20000	5240	26.2%	6650	33.3%	4350	22%	6810	34.1%
50000	8450	16.9%	11150	22.3%	7100	14%	11037	22.1%
100000	11800	11.8%	16000	16.0%	10050	10%	15500	15.5%
200000	16200	8.1%	22300	11.2%	14050	7%	21444	10.7%
500000	23500	4.7%	33200	6.6%	21300	4%	31717	6.3%
1000000	30000	3.0%	43400	4.3%	28650	3%	41483	4.1%

**Table 1. Standard errors of estimates (sourced from ABS Women's Safety Survey 1996 Cat No. 4128.0 and ABS Personal Safety Survey 2005 Cat No. 4906.0).**

In this table, the columns headed SE give the standard error associated with a given sized estimate. To a good approximation, the true value has a probability of 67% of lying within one standard error of the estimate. The columns headed RSE simply give this standard error as a percentage of the estimate. Hence if an estimate for the 2005 survey gives 5,000 females, then the corresponding standard error is 2,000 and the relative standard error is 40%. Note that the standard errors for males in the 2005 survey are larger than for females due to the smaller sampling fraction.

When comparing the 1996 and 2005 surveys, the table gives the standard errors of the *differences* between estimates given a certain *average* estimate. (This only applies to females since no males were surveyed in 1996.)

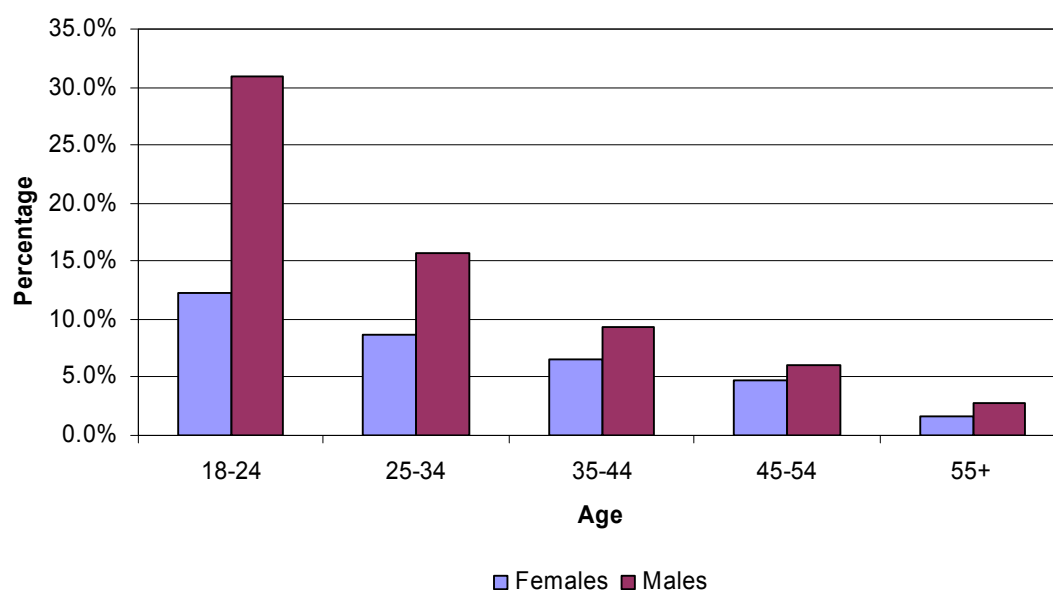


## 2. Patterns of Violence

### 2.1 Summary of Overall Levels of Violence in the Community: Demographics

In the twelve months prior to the PSS, 6% of women and 11% of men experienced violence. This equates to 443,800 women and 808,300 men. Men are about twice as likely as women to experience physical violence (11% of men compared to 6% of women) and women are about three times as likely to experience sexual violence (1.6% of women compared to 0.6% of men).

Men aged 18-24 years were the group most at risk of being a victim of violence. The prevalence of violence decreased with age for both genders, and at each age group there was a higher rate of violence experienced by men than women. However, whilst at the older age groups men still experienced violence at a higher rate of prevalence than women, the difference was much lower than for the younger age groups (see Figure 1).



**Figure 1. Percentage of the population who experienced violence in the last twelve months<sup>5</sup>.**

<sup>5</sup> All figures refer to the adult population, with the exception of the figures on abuse before the age of 15.



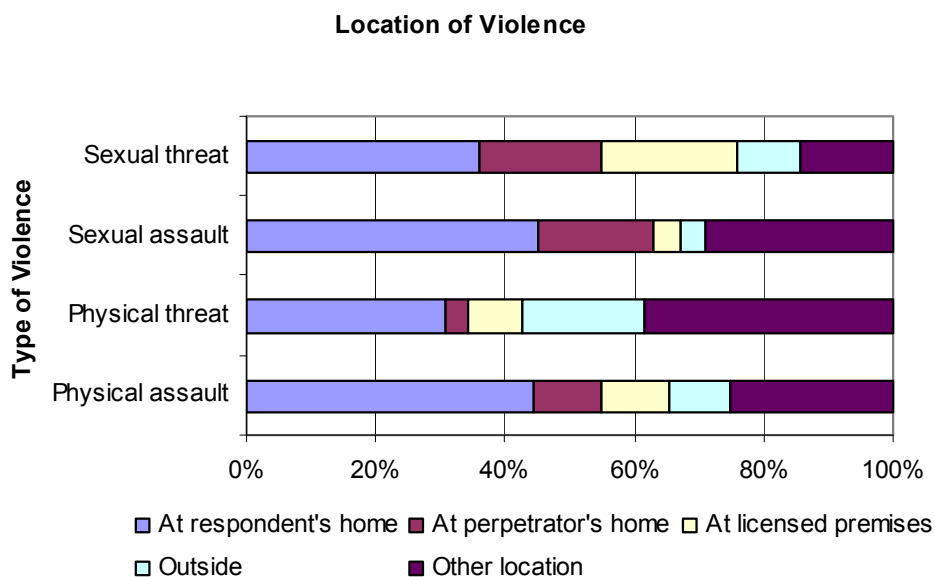
Most violence towards women occurred within a home, with 37% occurring at the victim's home and 11% at the perpetrator's home. A further 9% occurred at licensed premises, and 11% occurred outside, with the remainder occurring in other locations. Figure 2 shows the breakdown of the location of where the violence occurred for each type of violence and Figure 3 shows the breakdown of the type of violence experienced at each location. These two methods of examining the relationship between type and violence and the location of the violence give different insights.

The home is the main site of violence against women for both physical and sexual violence. Figure 2 shows that 44% of all physical assault towards women was experienced in the respondent's home, 10% in the perpetrator's home, 11% in licensed premises, 10% outside and 25% in other locations<sup>6</sup>. This compares to 45% of sexual assault towards women experienced in the respondent's home, 18% at the perpetrator's home 4% in licensed premises, 4% outside and 29% at other locations. As the percentage of sexual assault experienced in licensed premises or outside is less than half that of physical assault, this suggests that sexual assault is less likely to occur in a public place, however, 21% of sexual threats towards women occurred in the public domain of licensed premises.

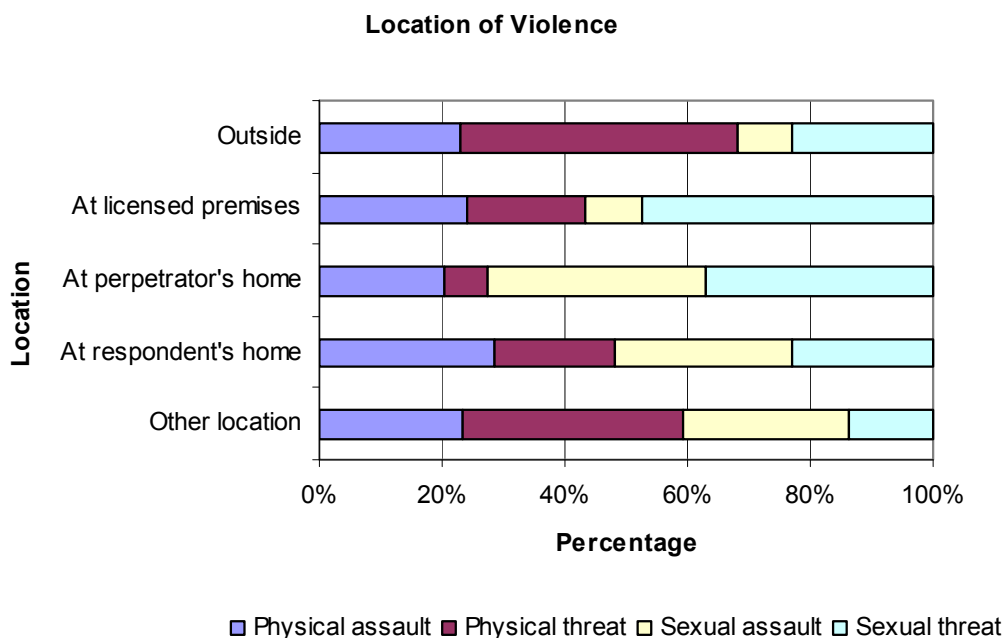
Figure 3 shows that the type of violence experienced is related to the location. Within the respondent's home, physical and sexual violence (both assault and attempted assault) were all approximately evenly represented. The type of violence experienced at the perpetrator's home was more likely to be sexual than physical with over 70% of the violence experienced at the perpetrator's home in the last twelve months being sexual assault or attempted/threatened sexual assault. Almost half of the violence experienced at licensed premises in the last twelve months was sexual threat and less than 10% was sexual assault. Physical assault and physical threat/attempted physical violence each represented about 20% of the violence experienced at licensed premises. Of the violence experienced outside, attempted physical assault was the most common (45%) and sexual assault was the least common (less than 10%). Physical assault and attempted/threatened sexual assault each represented just under one quarter of the violence experienced outside.

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<sup>6</sup> Figures in the ABS publication show that 64% of physical violence towards women (with a male perpetrator) occurred in a home, but did not specify whose home. The data available in the RADL differentiated between the respondent's home and the perpetrator's home, but incidents that occurred in any other person's home are incorporated in the 'other location' category. Thus the 64% quoted in the ABS publication can be reconciled to the RADL analysis with 44% occurring in the respondent's home, 10% in the perpetrator's home and the remaining 10% in another home incorporated in the 'other location' category.

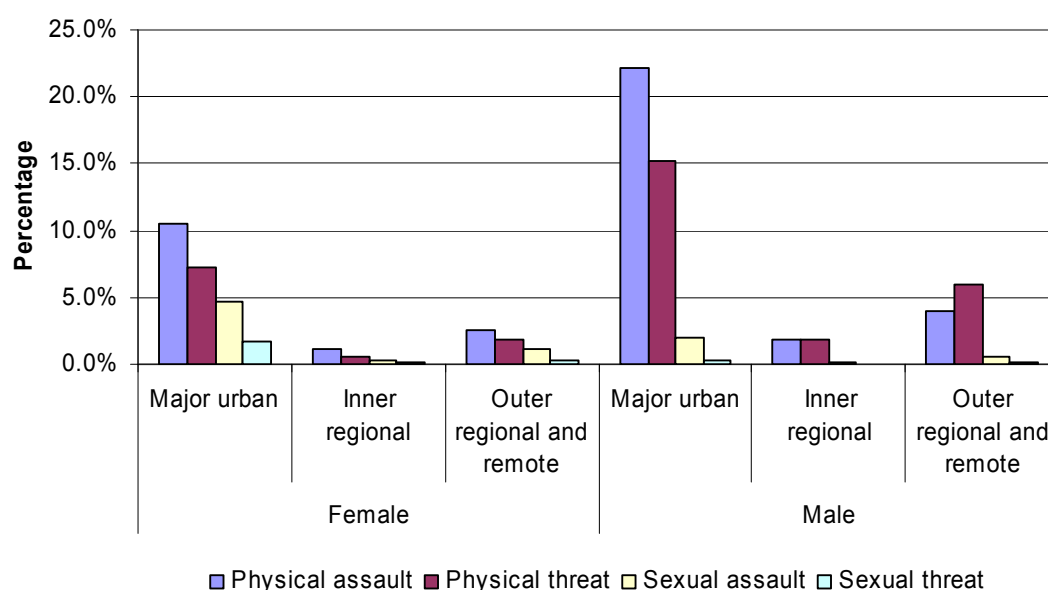


**Figure 2. Breakdown of where the violence occurred for each type of violence (females only).**



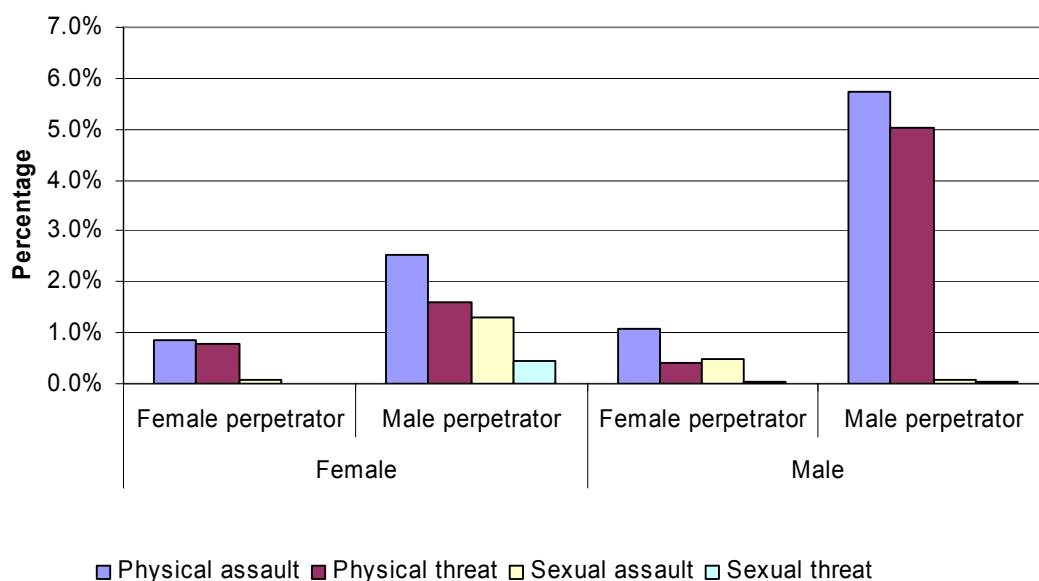
**Figure 3. Breakdown of the type of violence experienced at each location (females only).**

Prevalence rates of all types of violence, towards both women and men, were higher in major urban areas, followed by outer regional and remote areas. The lowest prevalence rates were in inner regional areas. Typically in each region, the types of violence experienced towards women are in similar proportions, with physical assault being most common, physical threat second most common, sexual assault third most common and sexual threat the least common. Males showed a slightly different profile, with more physical assault than physical threat in major urban areas, but more physical threat than physical assault in outer regional and remote areas. The rates were similar in inner regional areas.



**Figure 4. Percentage of the population of each region who experienced violence in the last twelve months.**

Perpetrators of physical and sexual violence are overwhelmingly male. Both women and men who experienced physical violence were more likely to have had a male perpetrator (72% of females and 88% of males). Sexual violence is more likely to have had a perpetrator of the opposite sex. Of sexual assaults experienced by women in the twelve months prior to the survey, 101,062 were by a male perpetrator and 6090 were by a female perpetrator. Of sexual assaults experienced by men in the twelve months prior to the survey, 36,781 were by a female perpetrator, and 6,810 were by a male perpetrator.



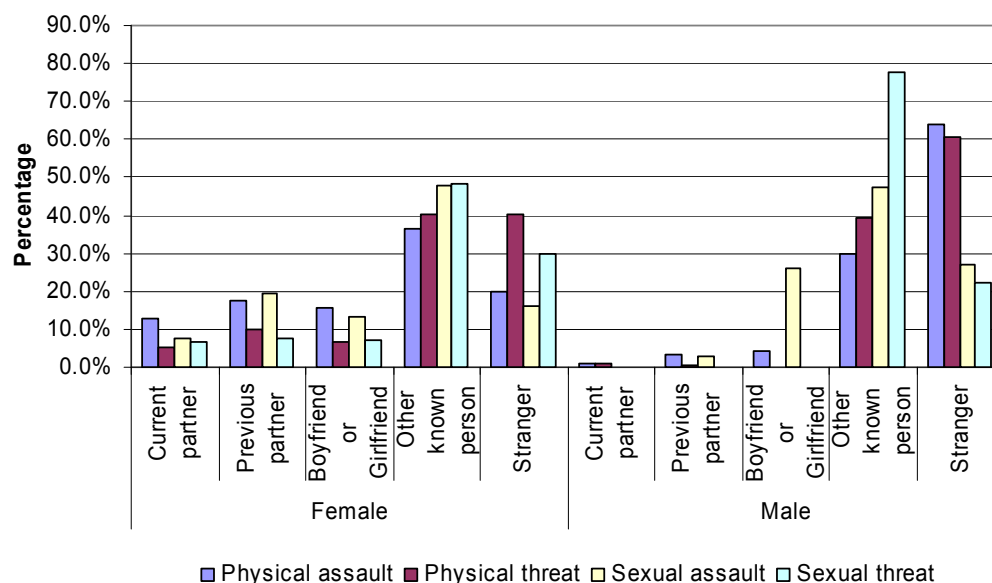
**Figure 5. Percentage of the population who experienced violence in the last twelve months, by the gender of perpetrator and type of violence experienced.**

Whilst men experienced a higher overall rate of violence than women, women were more likely to be a victim of intimate partner violence by a past or current partner than men. This finding is consistent for both physical and sexual violence and is evident in Figure 6. Only a small proportion of violence directed against men was perpetrated by female partners or ex-partners. The majority of violence experienced by men was perpetrated by a male stranger or male family member or friend.

This is consistent with other Australian research which confirms that in the majority of cases violence against women is committed by an offender known to the victim (current or ex-partner, male family member and friend) (ABS 2003, Mouzos and Makkai 2004).

The survey results show that most of the respondents who experienced violence identified ‘other known person’<sup>7</sup> or ‘stranger’ as the perpetrator. However, as the survey did not collect detailed information on the frequency of violence experienced, it is not possible to extrapolate this result to draw conclusions about the relationship of the perpetrator and incidences and costs of violence.

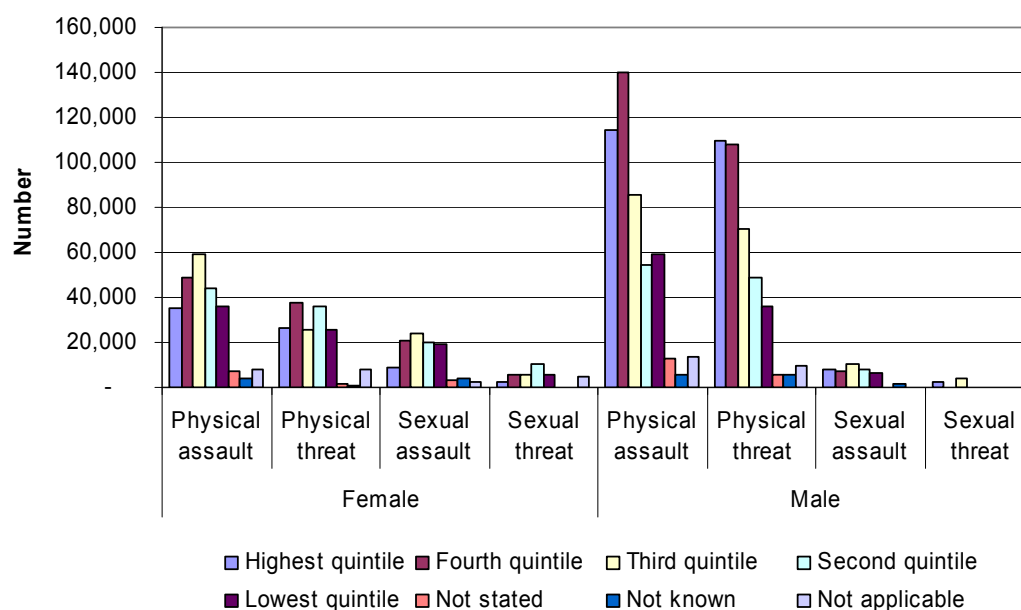
<sup>7</sup> Including family and friends etc, but excluding current and previous partners and boyfriends/girlfriends/dates.



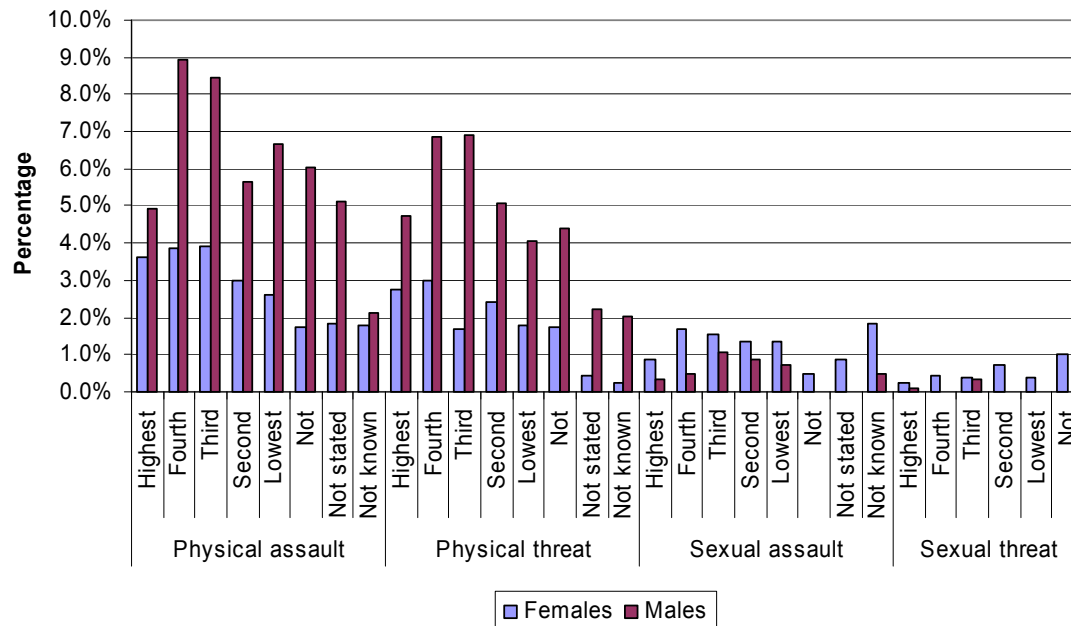
**Figure 6. The relationship of the perpetrator to the respondent for those who experienced violence in the last twelve months (by sex of respondent).**

The qualifications women had little influence on the prevalence rates of violence experienced in the last twelve months. There was also no indication that the qualifications of women were related to the type of violence that they were exposed to.

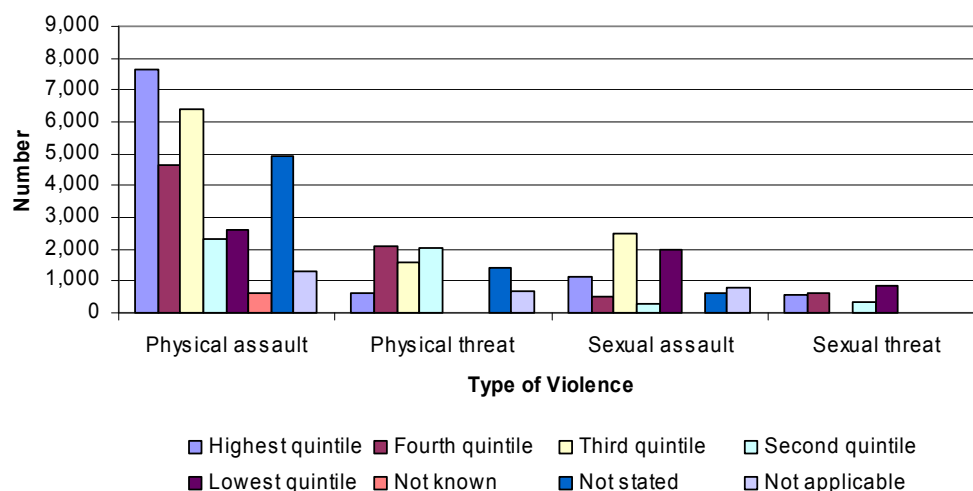
There was no strong relationship between income and experience of violence (see Figure 7 to Figure 9). This is an interesting finding in view of the findings of a number of previous studies (cited in Taft 2002) that low income has been found to be one of a number of markers of risk for domestic violence.



**Figure 7. Number of persons who experienced violence in the last twelve months based on quintile of the respondent's weekly cash income.**



**Figure 8. Percentage of population who experienced violence in last twelve months by quintile of respondent income.**

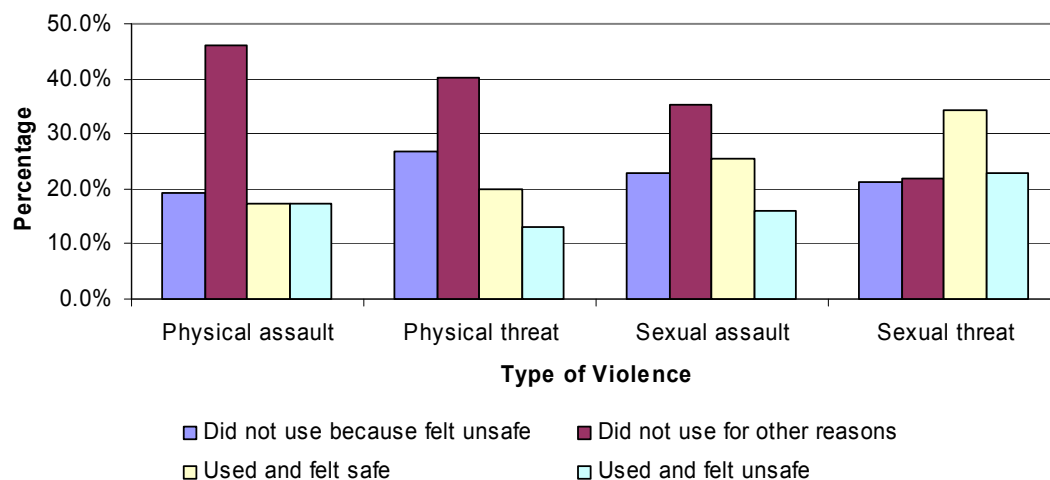


**Figure 9. Number of women who experienced violence by their current partner in the last twelve months based on quintile of the partner's weekly cash income.**

Experiences of violence can affect a woman's feelings of safety. Two ways that this was investigated were through women's experiences of using public transport and their experiences of walking alone in their local area after dark.

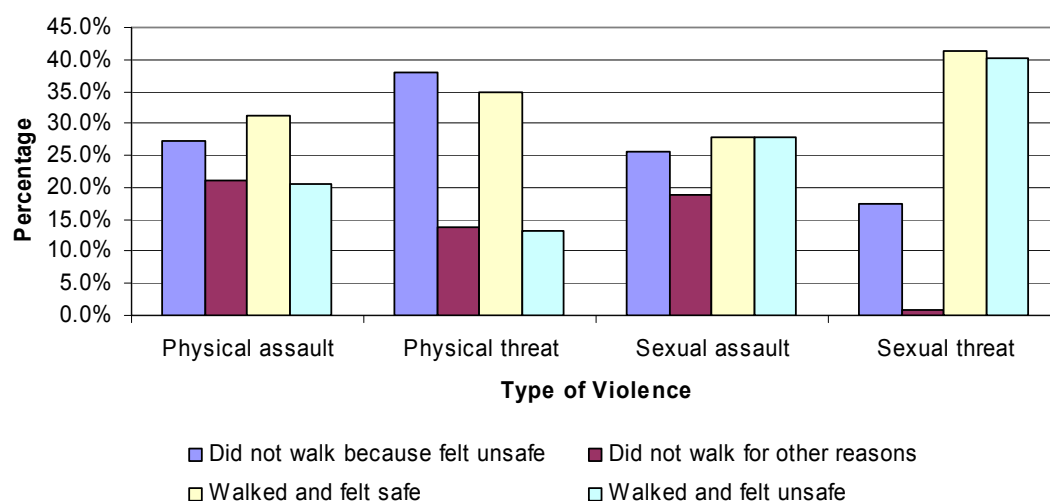
Women who had experienced physical violence were less likely to have used public transport in the last twelve months (either because they felt unsafe or for other reasons) than women who had experienced sexual violence. Women who had experienced physical or sexual assault were less likely to have used public transport than those who had experienced physical or sexual threats, respectively. Interestingly, of those women who have experienced some type of violence in the last twelve months and also used public transport in the last twelve months, only those women who experienced physical violence had a higher proportion who felt unsafe using public transport compared to those who did feel safe.

Respondents who had experienced violence and used public transport in the last twelve months were asked about their feelings of safety when *waiting* for the public transport (see Figure 10). Those who had experienced assault were less likely to feel safe than those who had experienced threats, with the experience of physical assault having the lowest feelings of safety. 29% of women who had experienced physical assault felt safe waiting for public transport compared to 37% of those who experienced physical threat, 41% who experienced sexual assault and 53% who experienced sexual threat.



**Figure 10. Use of public transport in the last twelve months by women who have experienced violence in the last twelve months.**

Of the women who had experienced violence in the last twelve months, between 17% (sexual threat) and 38% (physical threat or attempted physical violence) did not walk alone in their local area after dark because they felt unsafe (see Figure 11). Of those who had experienced physical or sexual assault, about a quarter did not walk alone due to feeling unsafe. Of the women who had experienced physical violence and walked alone in their local area after dark, 60% who had been assaulted felt safe walking and 72% who had been threatened felt safe walking. A lower percentage of women who had experienced sexual violence and walked alone after dark felt safe, with about half feeling safe and half feeling unsafe.

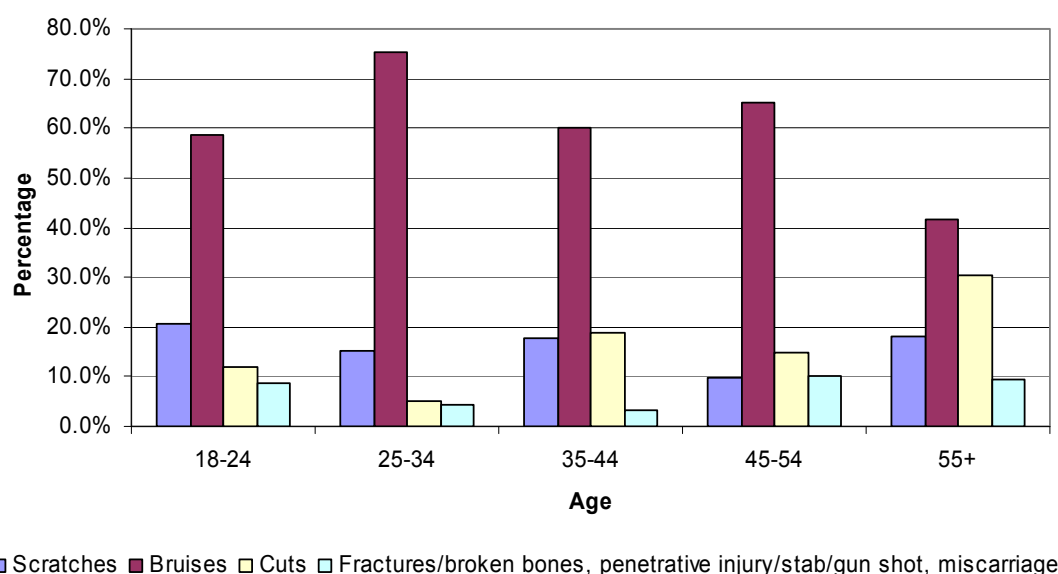


**Figure 11. Experiences of walking alone in the local area after dark by women who have experienced violence in the last twelve months.**

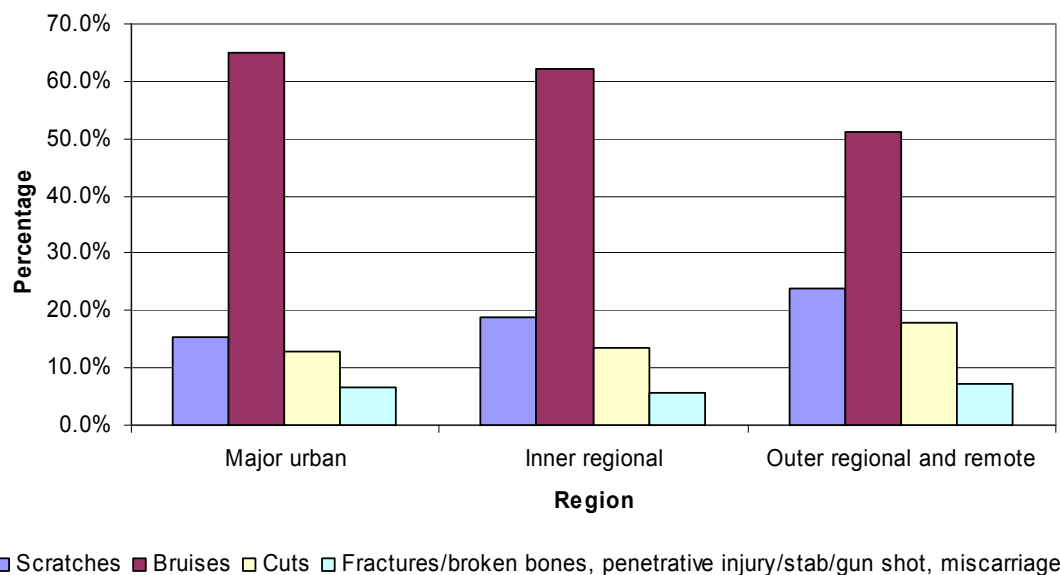


Bruises were the most common form of injury received in physical assaults (see Figure 12). This is consistent across all age groups and all regions. Scratches and cuts were the next most common types of injury, with scratches being more common for the younger age groups and cuts being more common for the older age groups. More serious injuries, including fractures and broken bones, penetrative injuries/stabs/gunshots and miscarriages were more common in the 18-24 year age group and the 45+ age groups.

There was no real difference in the type of injuries received as a result of physical assault in major urban, inner regional and outer regional and remote areas.



**Figure 12. The type of injuries received in those cases of violence in which an injury of some type was inflicted in the last twelve months by age of respondent. (Females only)**



**Figure 13. The type of injuries received in those cases of violence in which an injury of some type was inflicted in the last twelve months by region of residence of the respondent. (Females only)**

## 2.2 Detailed Tables

Age Group	Females	Males
18-24	944,917	982,632
25-34	1,404,417	1,399,313
35-44	1,498,428	1,470,042
45-54	1,400,118	1,372,714
55+	2,445,254	2,253,424
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,693,134</b>	<b>7,478,125</b>

**Table 2. Population of Australia.**

Type of Violence	Women	% All Women	Men	% All Men
Physical assault	242,001	3.1%	485,386	6.5%
Physical threat or attempted physical assault	162,387	2.1%	392,845	5.3%
Sexual assault	101,618	1.3%	42,317	0.6%
Sexual threat	34,885	0.5%	5,666	0.1%

**Table 3. Population who have experienced violence in the last twelve months.**

Age Group	Women	% All Women	Men	% All Men
18-24	116,247	12.3%	304,312	31.0%
25-34	121,758	8.7%	219,341	15.7%
35-44	98,757	6.6%	138,182	9.4%
45-54	66,436	4.7%	83,956	6.1%
55+	40,570	1.7%	62,480	2.8%

**Table 4. Population who have experienced violence in the last twelve months by age.**

Qualification	Women who experienced violence	Total number of women	% Women who experienced violence
Not applicable	24,481	275,483	8.9%
Postgraduate Degree	7,028	201,352	3.5%
Graduate Diploma/Graduate Certificate	16,717	246,397	6.8%
Bachelor Degree	60,844	1,106,800	5.5%
Advanced Diploma/Diploma	44,243	706,176	6.3%
Certificate III/IV	53,012	780,914	6.8%
Certificate I/II	18,920	416,271	4.5%
Certificate not further defined	10,512	127,602	8.2%
Year 12	87,394	1,059,642	8.2%
Year 11	29,493	452,166	6.5%
Year 10 or below	45,544	1,130,105	4.0%
Level not determined	5,130	61,345	8.4%
No non-school qualification	40,452	1,128,881	3.6%

**Table 5. Population who have experienced violence in the last twelve months by qualification. (females only).**

<b>Highest Level of Education</b>	<b>Physical assault</b>	<b>Physical threat or attempted physical assault</b>	<b>Sexual assault</b>	<b>Sexual threat</b>	<b>Total females</b>
<b>Female</b>					
Postgraduate Degree	2,507	2,680	641	1,201	201,352
Graduate Diploma/Graduate Certificate	12,129	3,372	1,766	127	246,397
Bachelor Degree	38,267	21,487	7,272	5,992	1,106,800
Advanced Diploma/Diploma	11,571	23,098	13,015	3,289	706,176
Certificate III/IV	27,227	24,035	8,664	3,926	780,914
Certificate I/II	10,125	6,699	3,300	494	416,271
Certificate not further defined	7,196	2,209	4,775	946	127,602
Year 12	54,755	28,408	20,937	6,397	1,059,642
Year 11	17,099	4,516	10,536	4,099	452,166
Year 10 or below	25,095	13,796	14,324	2,469	1,130,105
Level not determined	3,026	1,848		1,094	61,345
No non-school qualification	19,912	15,756	8,182	2,414	1,128,881
Not applicable	13,092	14,485	8,208	2,437	275,483
<b>Male</b>					
Postgraduate Degree	16,056	13,057	3,720	0	166,835
Graduate Diploma/Graduate Certificate	10,359	17,481	2,923	1,274	311,699
Bachelor Degree	64,342	43,012	4,414	3,609	188,534
Advanced Diploma/Diploma	41,039	31,675	10,272	0	1,011,780
Certificate III/IV	91,368	82,171	5,835	783	619,659
Certificate I/II	7,554	13,457	629	0	1,682,866
Certificate not further defined	15,420	18,891	1,910	0	228,241
Year 12	111,870	79,410	7,579	0	91,490
Year 11	11,607	14,746	3,136	0	1,090,174
Year 10 or below	44,304	43,050		0	308,752
Level not determined	2,897	479	479	0	827,268
No non-school qualification	41,744	19,009	658	0	48,385
Not applicable	26,826	16,407	763	0	902,443

**Table 6. Experience of Violence in last twelve months by highest level of education of respondent.**

<b>Location of Violence</b>	<b>Women who experienced violence</b>	<b>% All Women</b>
At respondent's home	183,443	2.4%
At perpetrator's home	52,221	0.7%
At licensed premises	45,915	0.6%
Outside	54,866	0.7%
Other location	153,924	2.0%

**Table 7. Location of where violence occurred in the last twelve months (females only).**

<b>Type of Violence</b>	<b>Major urban</b>		<b>Inner regional</b>		<b>Outer regional and remote</b>	
	<b>Count</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Females</b>						
Physical assault	162,175	10.5%	55,330	1.1%	24,496	2.5%
Physical threat or	111,734	7.2%	32,869	0.6%	17,784	1.8%
Sexual assault	73,022	4.7%	17,178	0.3%	11,419	1.2%
Sexual threat	26,180	1.7%	6,469	0.1%	2,236	0.2%
<b>Total Females In Region</b>	<b>1,545,377</b>		<b>5,171,756</b>		<b>976,001</b>	
<b>Males</b>						
Physical assault	353,143	22.1%	94,389	1.9%	37,854	4.0%
Physical threat or	242,521	15.2%	94,015	1.9%	56,309	6.0%
Sexual assault	31,278	2.0%	5,730	0.1%	5,309	0.6%
Sexual threat	4,883	0.3%	0	0.0%	783	0.1%
<b>Total Males In Region</b>	<b>1,596,040</b>		<b>4,943,864</b>		<b>938,221</b>	

**Table 8. Type of violence experienced in the last twelve months – counts and percentage of the population.**

	<b>Females</b>		<b>Males</b>	
	<b>Female perpetrator</b>	<b>Male perpetrator</b>	<b>Female perpetrator</b>	<b>Male perpetrator</b>
Physical assault	66,512	195,262	79,477	429,924
Physical threat or attempted physical assault	60,250	122,609	31,066	376,428
Sexual assault	6,090	101,062	36,781	6,810
Sexual threat	0	34,885	2,057	3,609

**Table 9. Experience of violence in last twelve months by gender of perpetrator.**

<b>Relationship of Perpetrator</b>	<b>Physical assault</b>	<b>Physical threat or attempted physical assault</b>	<b>Sexual assault</b>	<b>Sexual threat</b>
<b>Females</b>				
Current partner	30,541	8,499	7,805	2,355
Previous partner	42,611	16,356	19,841	2,716
Boyfriend or Girlfriend or date	37,780	11,094	13,317	2,478
Any other known person	88,391	65,366	48,729	16,876
Stranger	48,667	65,174	16,515	10,460
<b>Males</b>				
Current partner	5,006	3,440	0	0
Previous partner	16,225	1,369	1,129	0
Boyfriend or Girlfriend or date	21,431	0	10,994	0
Any other known person	145,360	154,041	19,953	4,392
Stranger	310,765	237,435	11,515	1,274

**Table 10. Experience of Violence in last twelve months by relationship of perpetrator.**

<b>Type of Violence</b>	<b>Physical assault</b>	<b>Physical threat or attempted physical assault</b>	<b>Sexual assault</b>	<b>Sexual threat</b>
<b>Females</b>				
Speaks English as first language	222,625	146,839	92,478	28,510
Speaks English very well	9,881	5,042	5,550	1,867
Speaks English well	6,856	9,273	3,211	4,507
Speaks English not well	2,638	1,234	380	0
<b>Males</b>				
Speaks English as first language	432,914	350,336	30,277	4,392
Speaks English very well	31,856	33,619	1,274	1,274
Speaks English well	12,919	8,890	10,767	0
Speaks English not well	6,516	0	0	0
Speaks English not at all	1,181	0	0	0

**Table 11. Experience of Violence in last twelve months by proficiency in speaking English.**

Quintile of respondent's weekly cash income	Physical assault	Physical threat or attempted physical assault	Sexual assault	Sexual threat
<b>Female</b>				
Highest quintile	34,906	26,653	8,428	2,201
Fourth quintile	48,660	37,851	21,103	5,685
Third quintile	59,187	25,765	23,616	5,742
Second quintile	44,142	36,208	20,089	10,734
Lowest quintile	36,237	25,374	18,967	5,624
Not stated	6,907	1,618	3,255	0
Not known	3,742	534	3,795	0
Not applicable	8,219	8,385	2,366	4,900
<b>Male</b>				
Highest quintile	114,734	109,414	8,183	2,057
Fourth quintile	139,948	107,824	7,591	0
Third quintile	85,695	70,313	10,711	3,609
Second quintile	54,179	48,729	8,117	0
Lowest quintile	59,136	35,950	6,472	0
Not stated	12,692	5,485	0	0
Not known	5,477	5,215	1,244	0
Not applicable	13,526	9,914	0	0

**Table 12. Quintile of respondent weekly cash income for respondents who have experienced violence in the last twelve months.**

Quintile of partner's weekly cash income	Physical assault	Physical threat or attempted physical assault	Sexual assault	Sexual threat
Highest quintile	7,649	641	1,153	539
Fourth quintile	4,634	2,108	495	622
Third quintile	6,419	1,598	2,469	0
Second quintile	2,336	2,050	257	327
Lowest quintile	2,612	0	1,985	866
Not known	641	0	0	0
Not stated	4,942	1,424	641	0
Not applicable	1,308	678	807	0

**Table 13. Quintile of partner weekly cash income for respondents who have experienced violence in the last twelve months with a current partner perpetrator (females only).**

<b>Employment Status of Females Who Experienced Violence</b>	<b>Physical assault</b>	<b>Physical threat or attempted physical assault</b>	<b>Sexual assault</b>	<b>Sexual threat</b>
Employed working full-time	25,662	6,587	4,757	1,162
Employed working part-time	1,183	0	257	0
Not in the labour force	3,331	1,912	2,792	1,193
Unemployed	366	0	0	0

**Table 14. Employment status of women who experienced violence in the last twelve months where perpetrator is their current partner (female only).**

<b>Use of Public Transport in Last twelve months</b>	<b>Physical assault</b>	<b>Physical threat or attempted physical assault</b>	<b>Sexual assault</b>	<b>Sexual threat</b>
Did not use because felt unsafe	46,662	43,642	23,307	7,394
Did not use for other reasons	111,728	65,419	36,016	7,609
<i>Sub-total Did not Use Public Transport</i>	<i>158,390</i>	<i>109,061</i>	<i>59,324</i>	<i>15,003</i>
Used and felt safe	41,594	32,170	26,061	11,924
Used and felt unsafe	42,016	21,157	16,233	7,958
<i>Sub-total Used Public Transport</i>	<i>83,611</i>	<i>53,326</i>	<i>42,295</i>	<i>19,882</i>
<b>% of those who used who felt safe</b>	<b>49.7%</b>	<b>60.3%</b>	<b>61.6%</b>	<b>60.0%</b>

**Table 15. Use of public transport in the last twelve months by women who had experienced violence in the last twelve months (females only).**

<b>Waited for Public Transport in the Last twelve months</b>	<b>Physical assault</b>	<b>Physical threat or attempted physical assault</b>	<b>Sexual assault</b>	<b>Sexual threat</b>
Waited and felt safe	24,278	19,495	17,248	10,662
Waited and felt unsafe	59,332	33,831	25,047	9,220
<b>Total</b>	<b>83,611</b>	<b>53,326</b>	<b>42,295</b>	<b>19,882</b>
<b>% waited who felt safe</b>	<b>29.0%</b>	<b>36.6%</b>	<b>40.8%</b>	<b>53.6%</b>

**Table 16. Feelings of safety of waiting for public transport of women who had experienced violence in the last twelve months and used public transport in the last twelve months (females only).**



Walked Alone in the Local Area After Dark	Physical assault	Physical threat or attempted physical assault	Sexual assault	Sexual threat
Did not walk because felt unsafe	65,946	61,741	25,899	6,079
Did not walk for other reasons	51,240	22,547	19,088	327
<i>Sub-total Did Not Walk Alone after dark</i>	<i>117,186</i>	<i>84,288</i>	<i>44,987</i>	<i>6,406</i>
Walked and felt safe	75,231	56,511	28,284	14,410
Walked and felt unsafe	49,583	21,588	28,347	14,069
<i>Sub-total Did Walk Alone After Dark</i>	<i>124,814</i>	<i>78,099</i>	<i>56,631</i>	<i>28,479</i>
<b>% of those who walked alone who felt safe</b>	<b>60.3%</b>	<b>72.4%</b>	<b>49.9%</b>	<b>50.6%</b>

**Table 17. Walking alone in their local area after dark in the last twelve months by women who had experienced violence in the last twelve months. (females only).**

Age Group	Injury Received			
	Scratches	Bruises	Cuts	Fractures/broken bones, penetrative injury/stab/gun shot, miscarriage
<b>Physical Assault</b>				
18-24	10,572	29,907	6,096	4,347
25-34	9,061	45,266	2,989	2,700
35-44	6,435	21,657	6,829	1,155
45-54	1,851	12,354	2,827	1,958
55+	3,653	8,366	6,130	1,895
<b>Total</b>	<b>31,571</b>	<b>117,551</b>	<b>24,870</b>	<b>12,055</b>
<b>Sexual Assault</b>				
18-24		5,306		
25-34	128	8,000	1,471	520
35-44	1,475	7,182	2,104	1,651
45-54	554	2,260	774	0
55+	213	1,161	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,371</b>	<b>23,909</b>	<b>4,350</b>	<b>2,171</b>

**Table 18. Injuries received in the most recent incident of violence for women who experienced violence in the last twelve months by age group (females only).**

Region	Injury Received			
	Scratches	Bruises	Cuts	Fractures/broken bones, penetrative injury/stab/gun shot, miscarriage
<b>Physical assault</b>				
Major urban	18,632	78,693	15,432	8,074
Inner regional	9,495	31,457	6,864	2,915
Outer regional and remote	3,444	7,401	2,574	1,066
<b>Total</b>	<b>31,571</b>	<b>117,551</b>	<b>24,870</b>	<b>12,055</b>
<b>Sexual assault</b>				
Major urban	1,307	15,402	3,823	1,651
Inner regional	683	5,777	527	520
Outer regional and remote	381	2,730	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,371</b>	<b>23,909</b>	<b>4,350</b>	<b>2,171</b>

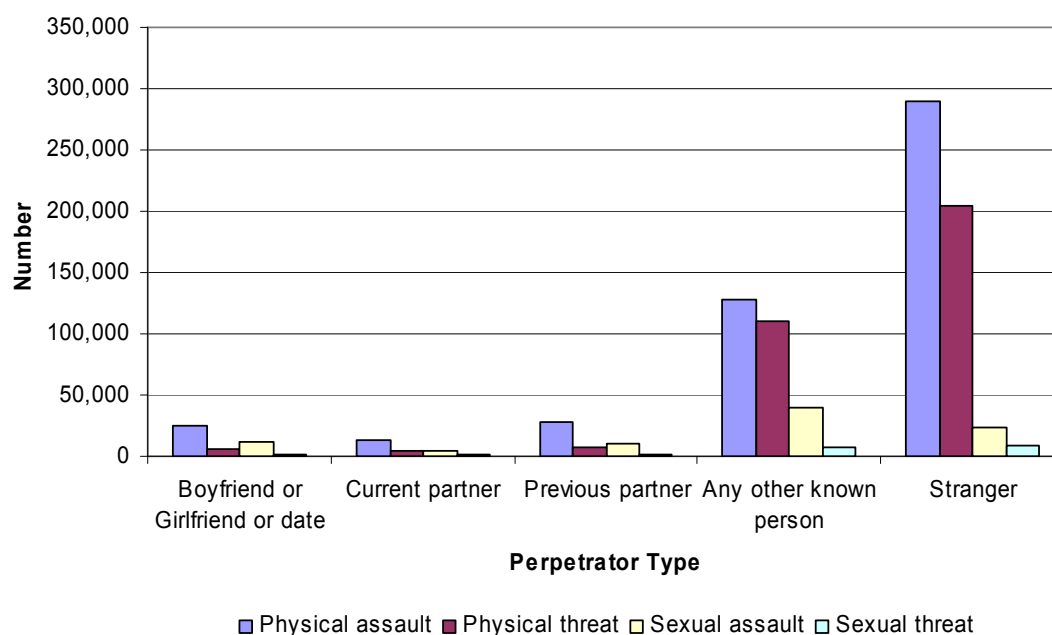
**Table 19. Injuries received in the most recent incident of violence for women who experienced violence in the last twelve months by region of residence (females only).**

Type of Injury	Major Urban		Inner Regional		Outer Regional and Remote	
	Percentage of Violence	Percentage of Anxiety	Percentage of Violence	Percentage of Anxiety	Percentage of Violence	Percentage of Anxiety
Physical assault	66.6%	66.1%	23.5%	25.5%	10.0%	8.4%
Physical threat or attempted physical assault	67.7%	67.9%	21.6%	20.9%	10.7%	11.2%
Sexual assault	72.1%	66.8%	16.7%	23.5%	11.1%	9.7%
Sexual threat	75.0%	75.9%	18.5%	18.6%	6.4%	5.6%

**Table 20. Comparison of the percentage of respondents who experienced violence in the last twelve months and the percentage of respondents who experienced anxiety as a result of the violence by the region in which they live (females only).**

## 2.3 Alcohol/Substances and Violence

Alcohol or drugs was often associated with the violence experienced by respondents (as shown in Figure 14). Alcohol and drug use was most often considered to contribute to violence when the incident involved a stranger. Of stranger violence, alcohol or drugs contributed to 80% of physical assaults (Table 21) and 84% of sexual assaults (Table 23).



**Figure 14. Number of incidents where alcohol/drugs contributed (in the last twelve months).**

Alcohol or drugs also contributed to a sizeable portion of domestic violence. These substances were considered to contribute to 36% of current partner physical assaults and 47% of previous partner physical assaults (see Table 21). Alcohol or drugs contributed to 58% of sexual assaults by a current partner and 47% of sexual assaults by a previous partner (see Table 23). This is consistent with the findings of the IVAWS study which found that the male partner's drinking habits is one of the strongest risk factors for current intimate partner physical violence (Mouzos & Makkai 2004). Table 21 - Table 24 shows a detailed breakdown of the percentage of each type of violence by each type of perpetrator in which alcohol or substances contributed to the violence.

## 2.4 Detailed Tables

Perpetrator	Alcohol and/or other drugs contributed		Alcohol and/or other drugs did not contribute		Do not know		Total	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Boyfriend / Girlfriend / date	25,661	43%	31,785	54%	1,766	3%	59,211	100%
Current partner	12,970	36%	21,866	62%	711	2%	35,547	100%
Previous partner	27,675	47%	29,265	50%	1,896	3%	58,836	100%
Any other known person	127,298	54%	97,723	41%	12,280	5%	237,301	100%
Stranger	290,174	80%	51,376	14%	22,237	6%	363,787	100%

**Table 21. Physical assaults in the last twelve months: Percentage of incidents where alcohol/drugs contributed for each perpetrator type**

Perpetrator	Alcohol and/or other drugs contributed		Alcohol and/or other drugs did not contribute		Do not know		Total	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Boyfriend / Girlfriend / date	5,553	50%	4,865	44%	677	6%	11,094	100%
Current partner	3,855	32%	8,084	68%	0	0%	11,939	100%
Previous partner	8,009	45%	8,883	50%	833	5%	17,725	100%
Any other known person	110,916	49%	95,628	43%	18,059	8%	224,603	100%
Stranger	204,834	68%	69,309	23%	29,171	10%	303,314	100%

**Table 22. Physical threat in the last twelve months: Percentage of incidents where alcohol/drugs contributed for each perpetrator type**

Perpetrator	Alcohol and/or other drugs contributed		Alcohol and/or other drugs did not contribute		Do not know		Total	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Boyfriend / Girlfriend / date	11,930	49%	12,029	49%	351	1%	24,311	100%
Current partner	4,540	58%	3,265	42%	0	0%	7,805	100%
Previous partner	9,765	47%	10,136	48%	1,069	5%	20,970	100%
Any other known person	39,991	58%	28,691	42%	0	0%	68,682	100%
Stranger	23,613	84%	3,324	12%	1,094	4%	28,031	100%

**Table 23. Sexual assault in the last twelve months: Percentage of incidents where alcohol/drugs contributed for each perpetrator type**

Perpetrator	Alcohol and/or other drugs contributed		Alcohol and/or other drugs did not contribute		Do not know		Total	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Boyfriend / Girlfriend / date	1,645	66%	833	34%	0	0%	2,478	100%
Current partner	1,488	63%	213	9%	653	28%	2,355	100%
Previous partner	795	29%	1,921	71%	0	0%	2,716	100%
Any other known person	7,647	36%	13,008	61%	612	3%	21,268	100%
Stranger	8,221	70%	2,831	24%	682	6%	11,734	100%

**Table 24. Sexual threat in the last twelve months: Percentage of incidents where alcohol/drugs contributed for each perpetrator type**

## 2.5 Injuries By Perpetrator Type

The perpetrators likely to cause serious injuries differ for males and females. As shown in Table 25 women's serious injuries<sup>8</sup> (fractures/broken bones, penetrative injuries, stabbings, shootings and miscarriages) were most often caused by an 'other known person' or a previous partner, with boyfriends/girlfriends/dates, strangers and current partners each also causing approximately 10-15% of serious injuries. For men, most serious injuries were caused by a stranger, with an 'other known person' responsible for the remainder of serious injuries.

Bruises were the most commonly sustained injuries for both males and females. Bruises were also the most common type of injury caused by nearly all perpetrator types. The only exception is partner violence experienced by males, where scratches are the most common injury, however as the relative standard errors for estimates of male experiences of partner violence are high, these figures should be used with caution.

<sup>8</sup> It is not clear what injuries are included in the "Other" category: Some serious injuries may be included in this category. However as "Other" injuries tend to follow a similar pattern to serious injuries, the results are similar even if some serious injuries are included in "Other" category.

Sex of Respondent	Injury Type	Any other known person	Boyfriend / Girlfriend / date	Current partner	Previous partner	Stranger
<b>Female</b>	Scratches	12,692	5,380	1,430	10,302	4,140
	Bruises	40,969	22,087	14,426	38,609	26,496
	Cuts	7,269	5,952	2,369	8,927	4,704
	Fractures / broken bones, penetrative injury/ stab/ gun shot, miscarriage	5,051	2,171	1,334	4,015	1,656
	Other Injuries	10,352	2,471	1,387	4,794	1,238
<b>Male</b>	Scratches	8,583	4,839	3,458	2,754	34,750
	Bruises	40,083	5,673		6,363	123,766
	Cuts	10,266	3,291	1,910	798	57,386
	Fractures / broken bones, penetrative injury/ stab/ gun shot, miscarriage	13,456	0	0	0	32,030
	Other Injuries	4,406	3,052	0	0	35,749

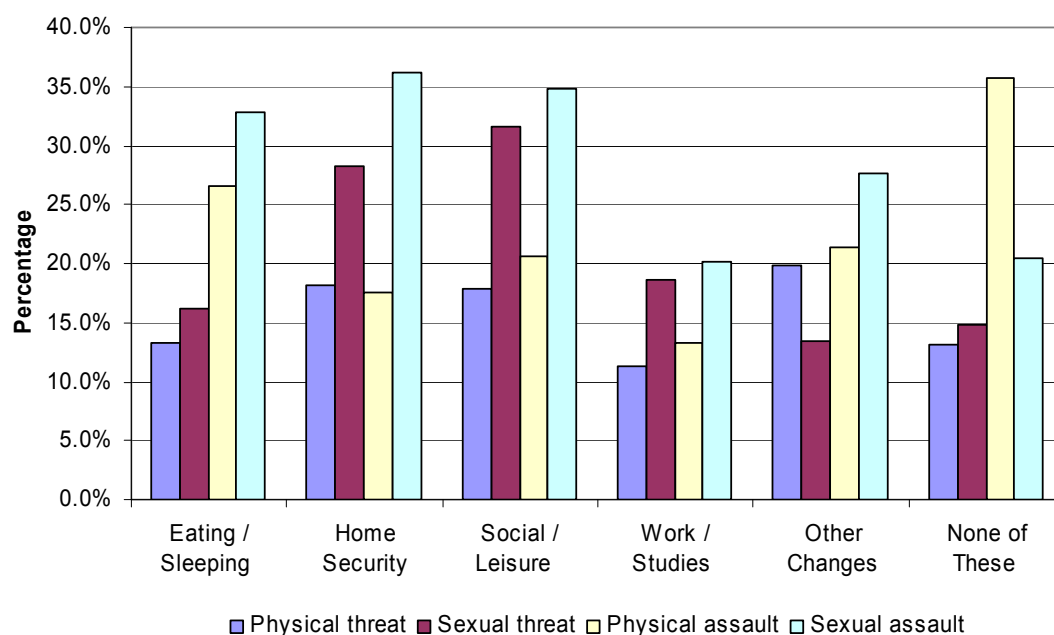
**Table 25. Injury type by type of perpetrator**

## 2.6 Changes in Aspects of Life Resulting From Violence

Violence has a wide ranging and persistent impact on the victim's physical and mental health and victims exhibit a range of health impacts as a consequence of the violence (WHO 2005, Vic Health 2004). A 2004 study by Vic Health demonstrated that intimate partner violence is the largest contributor to preventable disease burden in women aged 15-44 years. Intimate partner violence is responsible for more ill health and premature death under the age of 45 than high blood pressure, obesity and smoking (Vic Health 2004).

Anxiety and fear, or injuries caused by the violence can lead people that have experienced violence to make a range of changes to their lifestyle. As can be seen in Figure 15, women who have experienced sexual assault are particularly likely to change aspects of their life as a result of the violence. Approximately one in three sexual assault victims experienced changes in each of the following areas: eating/sleeping habits, home security, and social leisure activities. Women who had been physically or sexually assaulted were more likely to change aspects of their lives as a result of the violence than those that had been threatened.

Changes were made to work/studies by approximately one in five women who had experienced sexual assault, and a similar proportion of women who had experienced physical assault.



**Figure 15. Percentage of victims of each type of violence that changed aspects of their life as a result of violence (females only)**

Table 26 shows the number of respondents that changed aspects of their life as a result of violence by each perpetrator type.

Sex of Respondent	Perpetrator	Eating / Sleeping	Home Security	Social / Leisure	Work / Studies	Other Changes	None of These
Female	Any other known person	44,562	58,494	60,301	40,920	45,454	48,752
	Boyfriend or Girlfriend or date	21,025	16,212	15,872	8,036	17,208	17,928
	Current partner	11,127	9,313	4,320	2,398	509	7,939
	Previous partner	32,349	21,556	18,162	10,357	37,565	28,195
	Stranger	15,927	12,926	26,362	15,730	16,432	31,063
Male	Any other known person	23,525	20,987	25,799	20,277	20,090	70,479
	Boyfriend or Girlfriend or date	6,367	1,503	2,313	2,313	2,551	2,704
	Current partner	0	1,910	0	0	0	6,536
	Previous partner	2,411	454	2,823	0	454	4,407
	Stranger	21,981	19,130	70,093	56,203	30,292	127,428

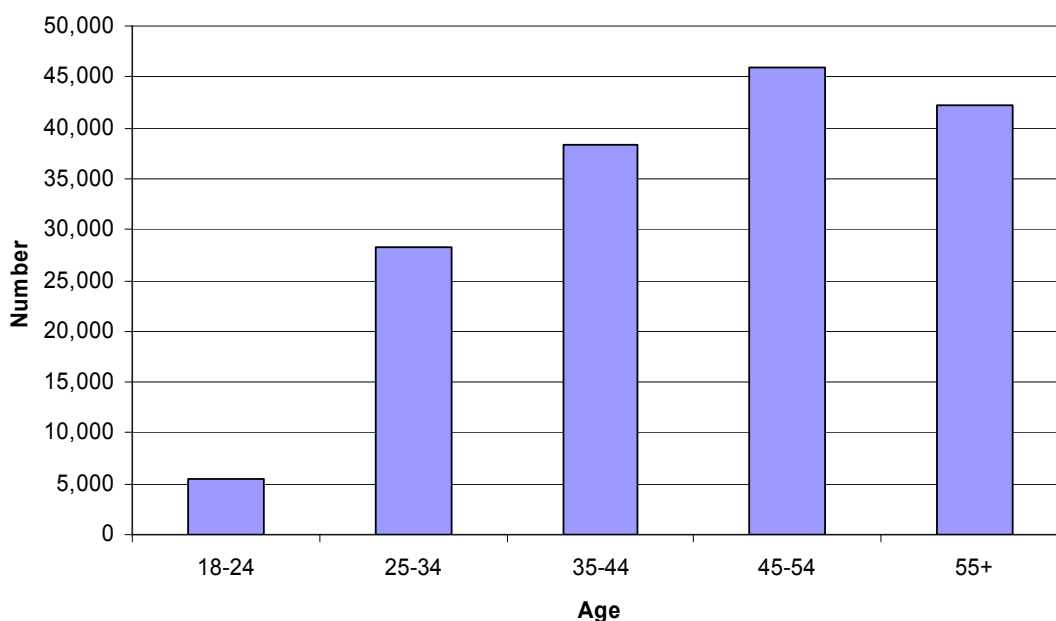
**Table 26. Number of respondents reporting changes to aspects of life resulting from violence, by type of perpetrator**

### 3. Partner Violence

The following section focuses on the most prevalent type of partner violence, involving a male perpetrator and female victim. There are several reasons for this focus. Firstly, this type of partner violence is most common, and a clear understanding of the prevalence and nature is required in order to plan appropriate services to meet this area of need. Secondly, the results for rarer types of partner violence have lower accuracy due to smaller sample sizes and higher standard error. Thirdly, large scale statistical studies of the prevalence of violence against women are still a fairly new development in Australia, and it is important to establish comparable benchmarks.

#### 3.1 Prevalence of Partner Violence

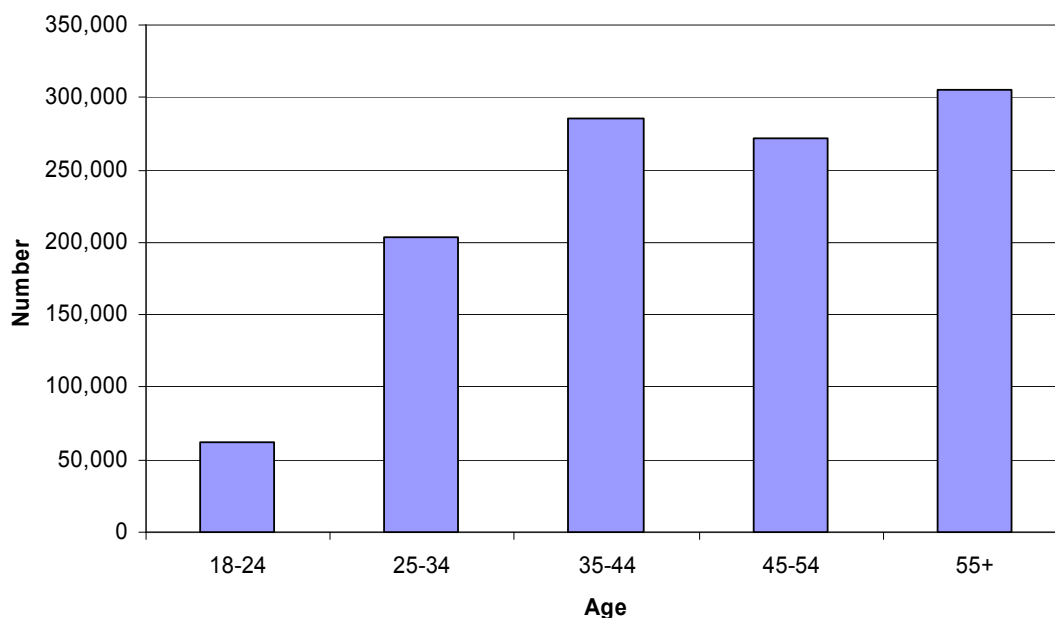
Violence by their current partner was reported to have been experienced by 160,118 women. Whereas higher rates of violence overall were experienced by younger people (shown earlier in Figure 1), women aged over 45 were more likely to have experienced current partner violence than younger women (Figure 16). Older women have the potential to have been in partner relationships for longer, or to have been in more partner relationships by virtue of their age. However, the finding is still somewhat surprising, as the Australian Component of the International Violence Against Women survey (Mouzos & Makkai, 2004) found higher levels of current partner violence experienced by younger women than older women. The main difference is a lower prevalence rate found for younger women in the PSS. There are many possible explanations for this difference, including different definitions of *partner* (IVAWS included boyfriends/girlfriends as partners whereas the PSS only included people who had lived together) and different measurements of violence. It is important to remember that this table shows the respondent's age at the time of the survey, not at the time of the violence.



**Figure 16. Number of women who experienced violence from male current partner by age**



Similarly, fewer younger women than older women had experienced previous partner violence (as can be seen in Figure 17). Of the 1,127,853 women who had experienced violence by a previous partner, 305,564 (27%) were aged over 55.

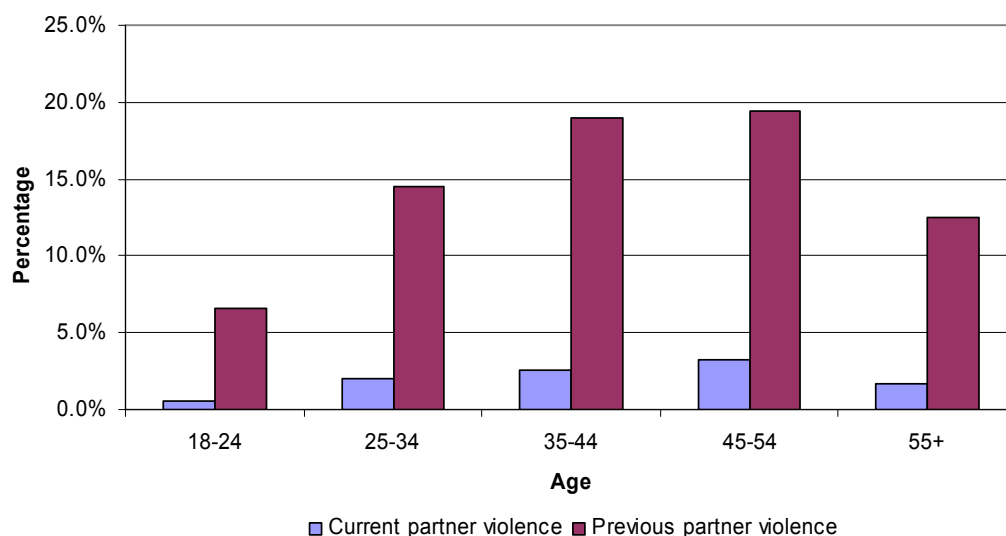


**Figure 17. Number of women who experienced violence from male previous partner by age**

Figure 18 shows the percentage of women in each age category who have experienced violence by a current or previous partner. Nearly one in five (19%) of women aged 35-54 had experienced violence by a previous partner. Of women aged 18-24, 7% had experienced previous partner violence and for women aged 25-34 this figure is 15%.

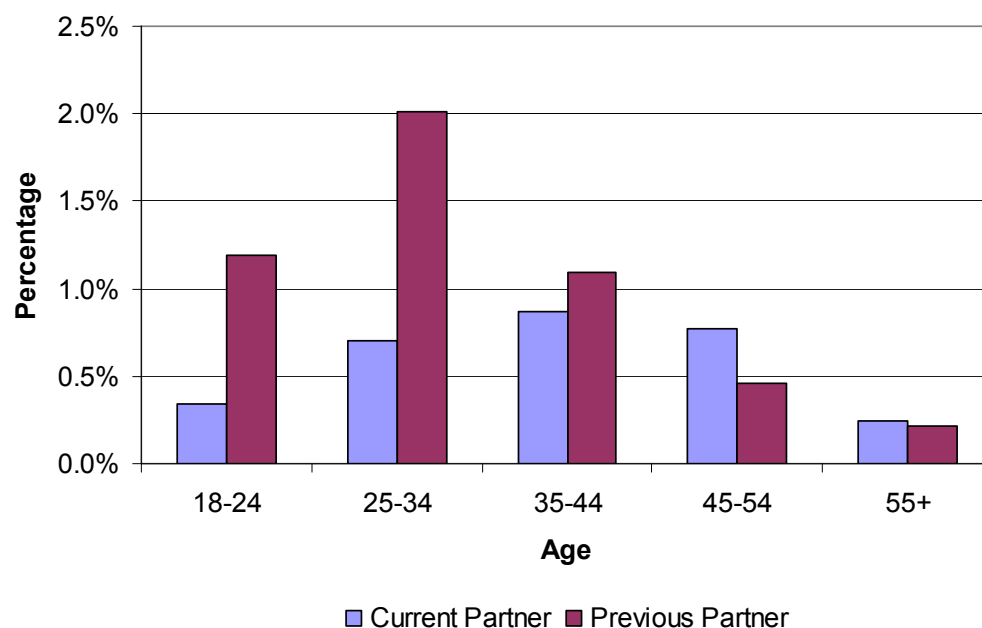
Violence by a current partner was also highest among 35-54 year olds, with 3.3% of women aged 45-54 and 2.6% of women aged 35-44 having experienced violence by their current partner. By comparison, 0.6% of women aged 18-24, and 2.0% of women aged 25-34 had experienced current partner violence.

The trend of violence increasing with age dropped off somewhat for women aged 55+, with 1.7% having experienced violence by a current partner and 12% having experienced violence by a previous partner.



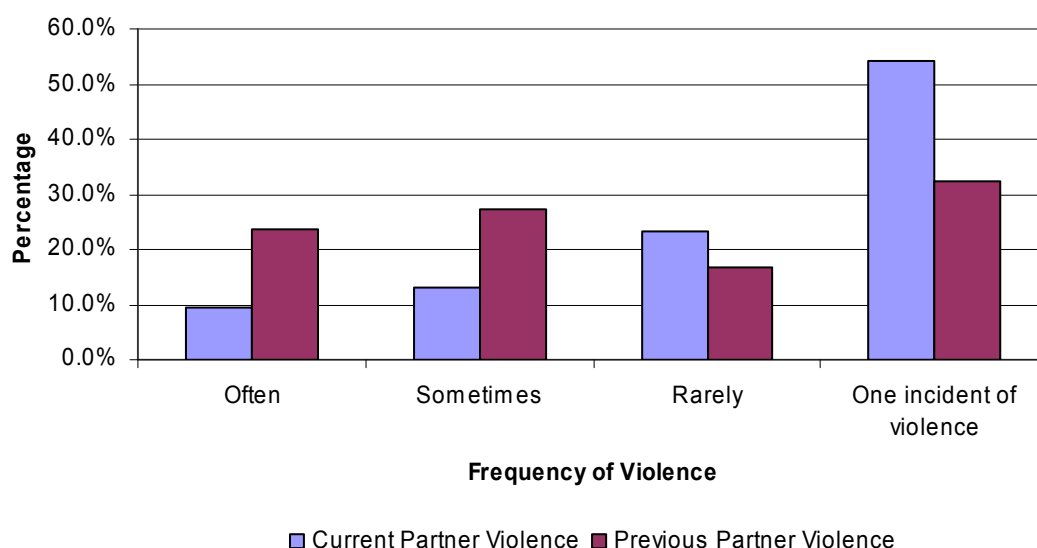
**Figure 18. Percentage of all women in each age group that have experienced partner violence**

A somewhat different picture is shown when looking at partner violence that has occurred within the twelve months prior to the survey. As can be seen in Figure 19, women across all age groups have experienced partner violence, but the highest prevalence rates are among women aged 25-44. This age group coincides with when many women are making the transition to parenthood and raising children. Interestingly, more women aged 18-44 had experienced violence by a previous partner than by a current partner, while the opposite pattern was present for women aged 45+.



**Figure 19. Percentage of all women in each age group that have experienced partner violence in the last 12 months**

Figure 20 shows the frequency of partner violence. Frequency of violence by a previous partner was indicated to be higher than frequency of violence by a current partner. The Australian Component of the International Violence Against Women survey also found that the level of violence by previous partners is much greater than that by a current partner (Mouzos & Makkai, 2004).

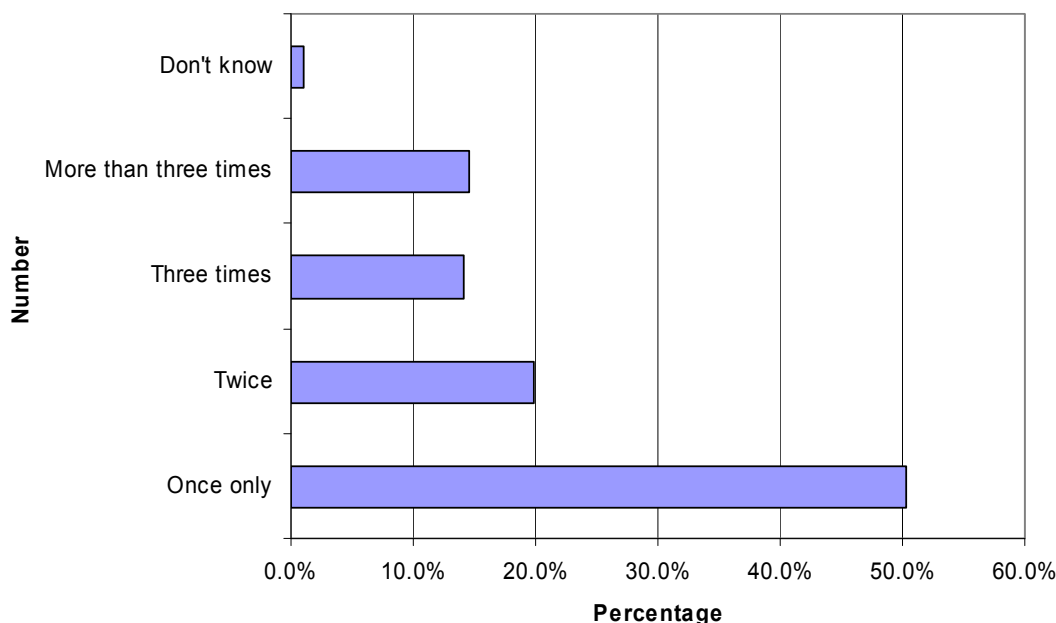


**Figure 20. Partner Violence: Frequency of Violence (Females Only)**

## 3.2 Separation

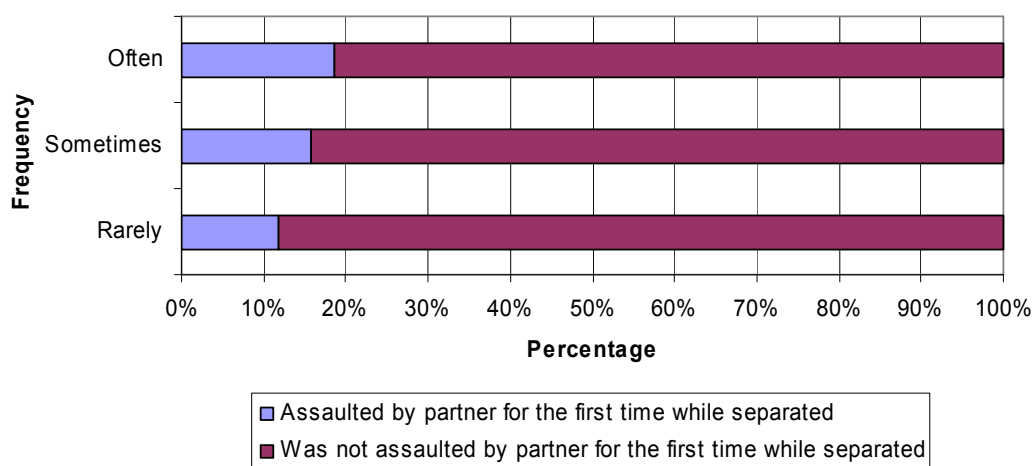
Separation is a time of increased risk for many women. The time around and after separation is a dangerous time for many women. In some cases post separation violence is a continuation of violence which occurred during the relationship, whilst in others the violence comes with separation (Laing, 2003). Where there is a history of partner violence, separation heightens the risk of escalation and the chance of serious assault and homicide (Humphreys, 2007).

In total, 59,402 women who had experienced violence by a current partner indicated that they had been separated from their partner and returned to the relationship. Half (50%) had been separated once, the remainder had separated twice (20%), three times (14%), or more than three times (15%) (see Figure 21).



**Figure 21. Current partner violence: number of times separated<sup>9</sup>**

As shown in Figure 22, leaving the relationship does not always reduce the risk of violence. For nearly one in five women who had experienced previous partner violence and been separated from the partner, violence first occurred during separation. Violence that occurred “Often” was more likely to have begun during separation (19%) than violence that occurred “Rarely” (12%).

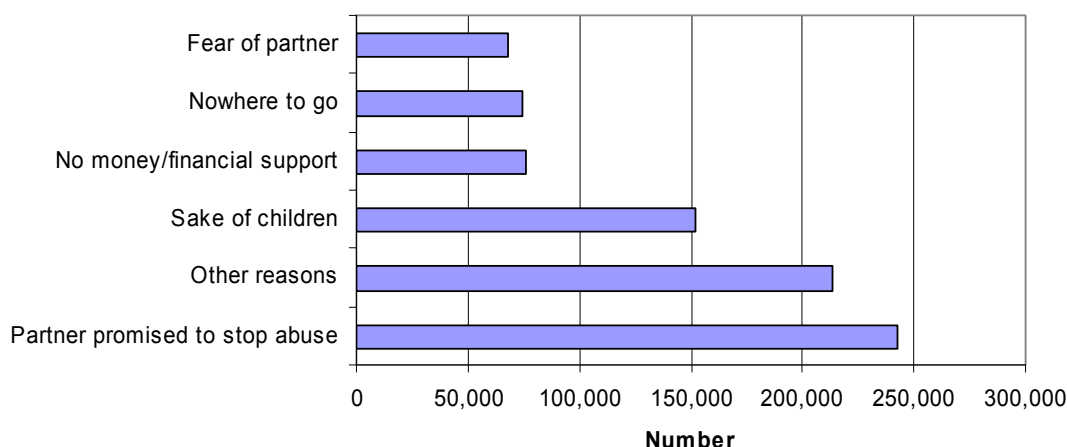


**Figure 22. Previous partner violence: Frequency of violence and whether the violence first occurred during separation<sup>10</sup>**

<sup>9</sup> Only asked if separations had occurred

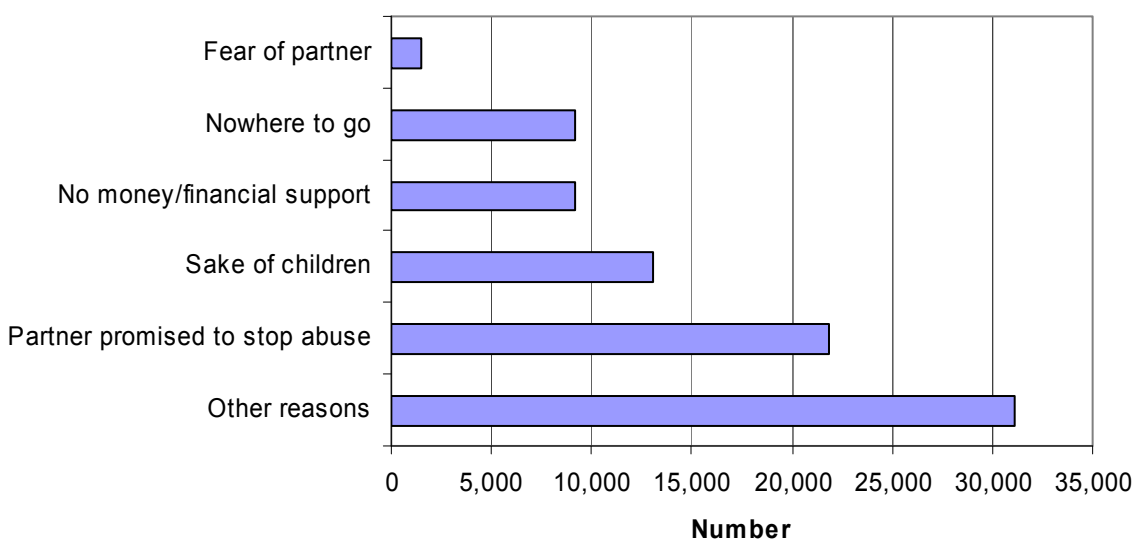
<sup>10</sup> Only asked of respondents who had separated from a partner that had been violent.

Respondents were asked for the reason or reasons for returning to a previous partner who had been violent. As can be seen in Figure 23 the most common reason for returning was that the partner had promised to stop the abuse (242,533). Another common reason for returning to the relationship was for the sake of the children (151,683). Having no money/financial support was a reason for 75,900 women, nowhere to go was a reason for 74,150 women, and fear of partner was a reason for 68,296 women. Other reasons also played an important role in deciding to return to the partner (213,751).



**Figure 23. Previous partner violence: Reasons for returning after separation**

The reasons given for returning to a current partner who had been violent are shown in Figure 24. The most common reasons for returning were “Other reasons”, followed by the partner having promised to stop the abuse. Women were less likely to indicate that fear of partner was the reason for returning to a current partner than a previous partner.



**Figure 24. Current partner violence: Reasons for returning after separation**

## 4. Violence Affecting Children

Family violence affecting children was covered in three ways in the PSS: childhood abuse; partner violence during pregnancy; and partner violence witnessed by children. All of these situations are associated with adverse social, psychological and physical outcomes for children (e.g. James, 1994; Humphreys, 2007; Mullen & Fleming, 1998; Ybarra, Wilkens, & Lieberman, 2007). Furthermore, research evidence shows that experiencing violence during childhood (either as a victim of abuse or witnessing parental violence) is associated with an increased likelihood of being a victim or perpetrator of violence in adulthood (e.g Heymen & Smith Slep, 2002; Humphreys, 2007; Indemaur, 2001; Mouzos & Makkai 2004).

### 4.1 Childhood Abuse

Physical and/or sexual abuse as a child significantly increases the likelihood of victimisation in adulthood. There are strong links between childhood victimisation and later victimisation in adulthood. (AIC 2004; Mouzos & Makkai 2004).

In total, 779,520 women (10%) experienced physical abuse before the age of 15, and 956,602 (12%) experienced sexual abuse before the age of 15.

The vast majority of women who had experienced physical or sexual abuse before the age of 15 experienced more than one occurrence of abuse (see Table 27 and Table 28). When the abuse begins at a younger age, it is more likely that abuse is experienced more than once. Women who experienced physical abuse that began before they were 6 years old were nearly 8 times more likely to experience more than one occurrence of abuse than one occurrence of abuse. In comparison, when the physical abuse first occurred between the age of 11 and 14, the abuse was approximately 2 times as likely to have occurred more than once rather than once.

Experienced physical abuse before age 15	Age at first abuse	Experienced more than once	Experienced once only	Total	% of abuse began at that age
Physical abuse before age 15	1-5 years old	227,359	2,912	230,271	30%
	6-10 years old	305,836	35,774	341,609	44%
	11-14 years old	102,561	52,308	154,869	20%
	Don't know	51,893	877	52,770	7%
<b>Total</b>		<b>687,649</b>	<b>9,1871</b>	<b>779,520</b>	<b>100%</b>

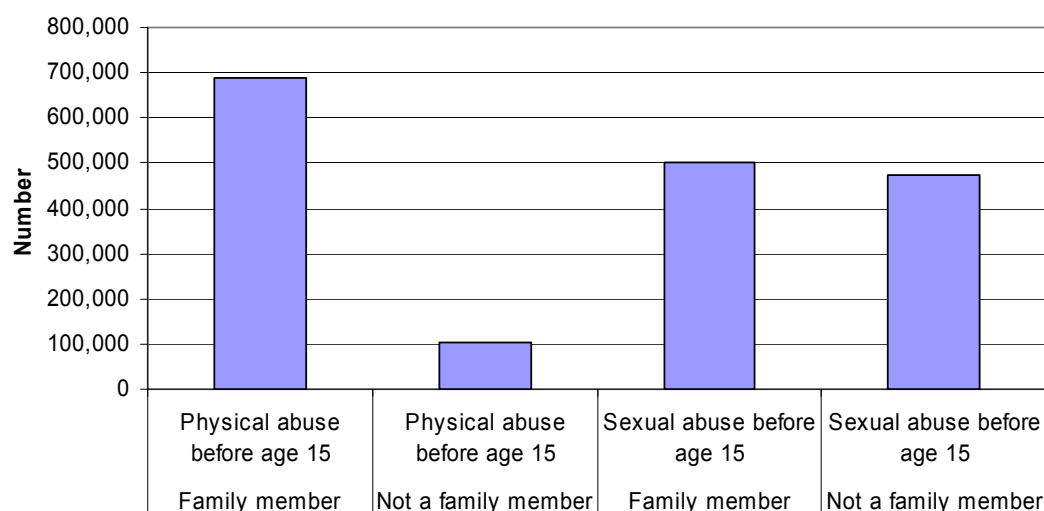
**Table 27. Women physically abused before age 15: Age at first abuse and whether abuse occurred more than once**

Similarly, women who experienced sexual abuse before the age of 6 were nearly 5 times as likely to experience more than one occurrence of abuse than one occurrence. Women who experienced sexual abuse that first occurred between the age of 11 and 14 were 1.2 times more likely to experience abuse more than once than once.

Experienced sexual abuse before age 15	Age at first abuse	Experienced more than once	Experienced once only	Total	% of abuse began at that age
Sexual abuse before age 15	1-5 years old	160,933	32,842	193,775	20%
	6-10 years old	339,002	114,729	453,731	47%
	11-14 years old	157,057	132,192	289,249	30%
	Don't know	17,143	2,705	19,848	2%
<b>Total</b>		<b>674,135</b>	<b>28,2467</b>	<b>956,602</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 28. Women sexually abused before age 15: Age at first abuse and whether abuse occurred more than once**

The majority of women that were abused as children were abused by family members (see Figure 25). Physical abuse was especially likely to be committed by a family member. In total, 686,914 women were physically abused by a family member and 101,923 were physically abused by a non-family member before the age of 15. Sexual abuse by a family member was experienced by 502,421 females before the age of 15, and sexual abuse by a non-family member was experienced by 475,138 females before the age of 15.

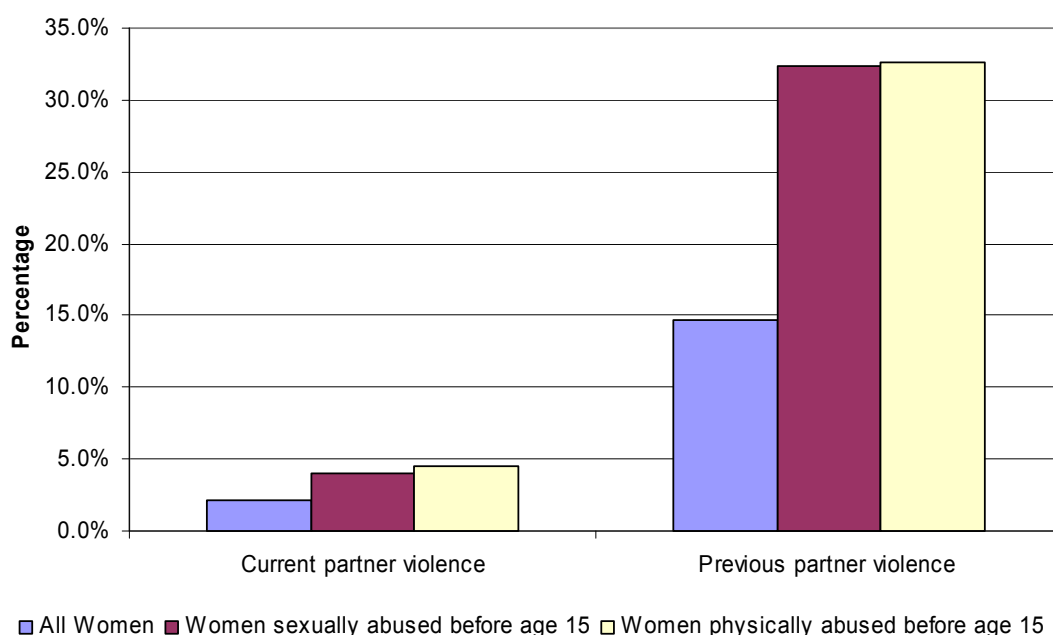


**Figure 25. Women abused before age 15: Number abused by a family member or non-family member**

According to ABS figures, of the approximately 779,500 women who experienced physical abuse before the age of 15, 411,600 (53%) indicated they had been abused by their father / stepfather, and 267,100 (34%) indicated they had been abused by their mother / stepmother (see Table 29). Of the approximately 956,600 women who had experienced sexual abuse before the age of 15, 335,500 (35%) indicated that the perpetrator was either a male relative other than father /stepfather, 158,100 (17%) indicated the perpetrator was their father / stepfather, and 157,700 (16%) indicated the perpetrator was a family friend (see Table 30).

#### 4.1.1 Childhood Abuse and Experience of Partner Violence as an Adult

As mentioned earlier in this section, previous research has found a relationship between experiencing abuse during childhood and subsequent experiences of violence in adulthood. As can be seen in Figure 26, women who experienced physical or sexual abuse during childhood were approximately twice as likely to experience partner violence compared to the adult female population as a whole.



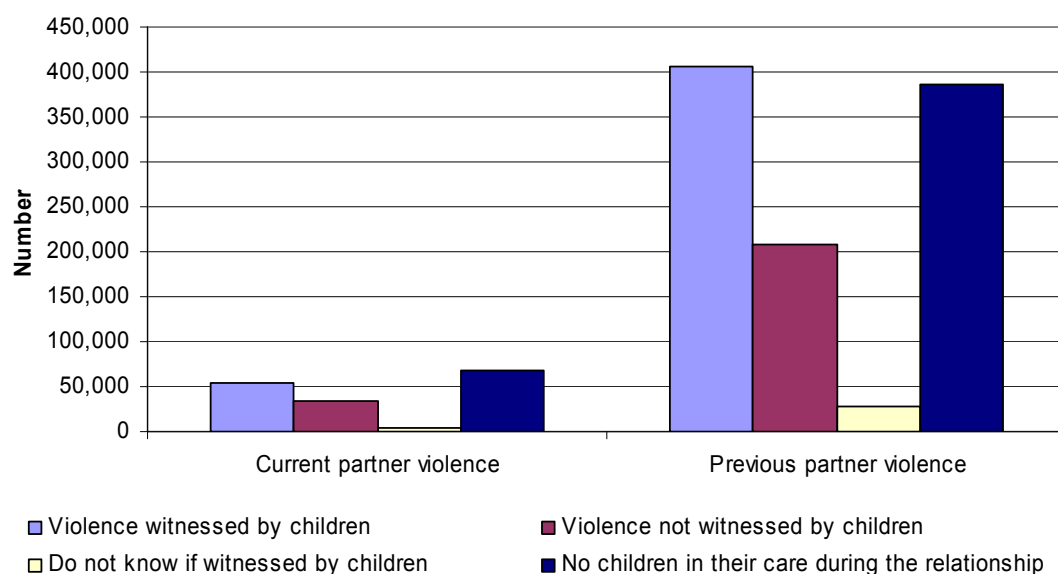
**Figure 26. Percentage of women who experienced violence by a current or previous male partner: All women and those abused before age 15**

#### 4.2 Children's Exposure to Domestic Violence

A high percentage of Australian children are exposed to domestic violence. A 2001 study of 5,000 young people aged between 12-20 years found that up to one quarter had witnessed violence (Indemaur, 2001). Children can be profoundly affected by witnessing violence (Humphreys, 2007). There is a growing body of research evidence that exposure to family and domestic violence can have major effects on a child's psychological, physical and social wellbeing (Humphreys, 2007; Laing 2000; Marcus & Braaf, 2007).

As can be seen in Figure 27, women reported that children witnessed a significant amount of the partner violence that occurred. Witnessing domestic violence is associated with a range of emotional and behavioural problems in children, as well as being associated with a higher risk of the children experiencing abuse themselves (James, 1994). The negative impact on children's development and increased rates of violence in later life is one more reason to provide prevention and intervention services to reduce domestic violence.

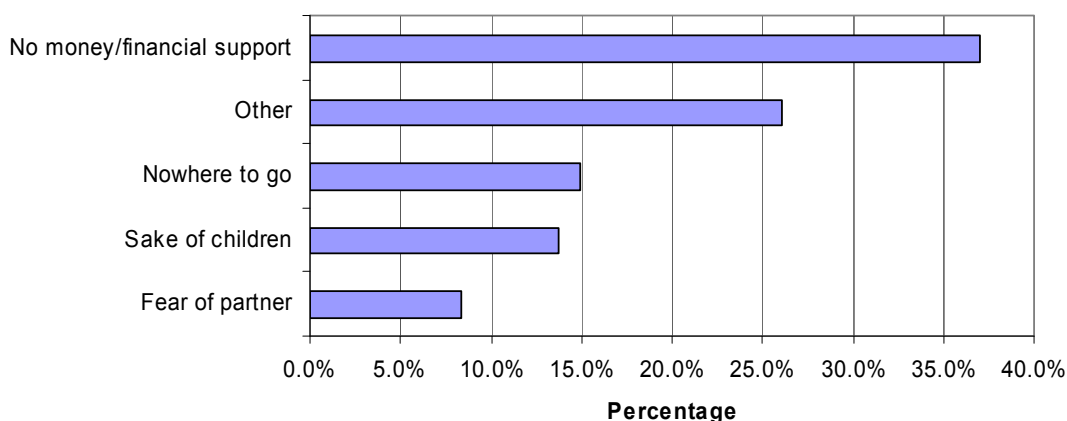




**Figure 27. Number of women who experienced violence by a current or previous male partner by whether violence was witnessed / not witnessed by children**

Leaving a violent relationship can be difficult whether or not there are children involved, however mothers can face additional challenges in escaping abuse, including finding money and accommodation to support their children as well as themselves, disruptions in their children's schooling if they are pulled out of school to enter a refuge or move away, and potentially leaving behind children's possessions in emergency situations. Clearly it is important to understand what factors influence women's ability to leave a relationship where children have been exposed to domestic violence, in order to provide assistance where it is needed. Figure 28 shows the reasons women felt they were unable to leave a current partner who had been violent, where children had witnessed the violence.

The most common reason for being unable to leave was lack of money/financial support (37%). One in six (15%) had nowhere to go. Despite the violence being witnessed by the children, 14% said the main reason they were unable to leave was for the sake of the children (it is possible this relates to concerns about the life they would be moving their children into given the high level of concern about having no financial resources and nowhere to go, or concerns that the violence may be diverted towards the children if the children spend time alone with the perpetrator of the partner violence). Fear of the partner was the main reason for staying for 8%.



**Figure 28. Current partner violence witnessed by children: Women's main reasons for being unable to leave<sup>11</sup>**

<sup>11</sup> Only includes women who had children in their care that witnessed the violence, and if they indicated they had ever wanted to leave their current partner

Figure 29 shows the main reasons for being unable to leave a current relationship in which children had witnessed violence, by the main reason for wanting to leave. It is interesting to note that of the women for whom the main reason for wanting to leave was concern for the children's safety, 52% said their main reason for staying was the sake of the children. Although the specific reasons that constitute staying "for the sake of the children" are not available, this seemingly paradoxical result may indicate that concerns for the children's safety related to staying in the violent relationship are outweighed by concerns that the children may be at greater risk of harm if the relationship is ended.

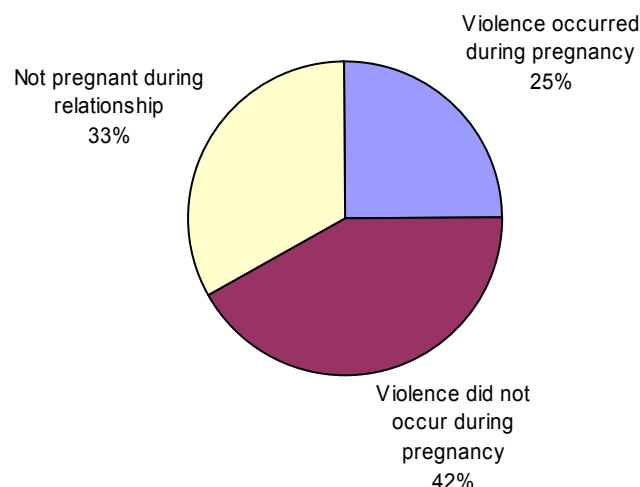
Main Reason for Wanting to Leave	Main Reason Unable to Leave	Count	%
<b>Because of partner's assaults, abuse or threats to respondent/children</b>	Fear of partner	813	10%
	No money/financial support	2,814	34%
	Nowhere to go	1,356	16%
	Other	2,404	29%
	Sake of children	887	11%
<b>Because of partner's assaults, abuse or threats to respondent/children Total</b>		<b>8,273</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Concern for children's safety</b>	No money/financial support	506	48%
	Sake of children	539	52%
<b>Concern for children's safety Total</b>		<b>1,045</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Concern for own safety</b>	Fear of partner	128	6%
	No money/financial support	868	44%
	Nowhere to go	330	17%
	Other	539	27%
	Sake of children	126	6%
<b>Concern for own safety Total</b>		<b>1,991</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Figure 29. Current partner violence witnessed by children: Women's main reasons for wanting to leave and being unable to<sup>12</sup>**

### 4.3 Domestic Violence During Pregnancy

The third way that children can be exposed to violence is through partner violence that occurs during pregnancy. For women, pregnancy is a time of increased risk of violence and abuse (Humphreys 2007: Taft, Watson and Lee 2002 Walsh and Weekes 2004). Of all female respondents who had experienced violence from a previous partner, 25% experienced violence during pregnancy (see Figure 30).

<sup>12</sup> Only includes women who had children in their care that witnessed the violence, and if they indicated they had ever wanted to leave their current partner



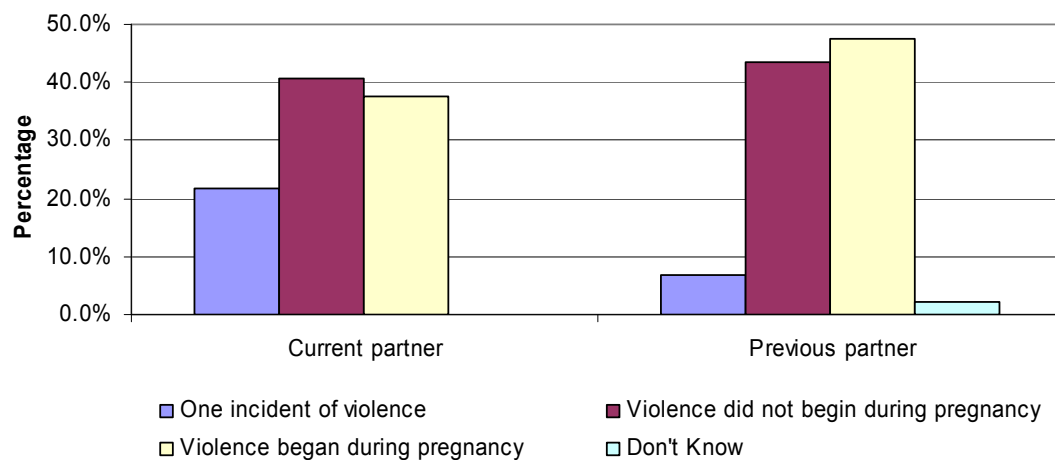
**Figure 30. Previous partner violence: Whether violence occurred during pregnancy<sup>13</sup>**

Of those women who experienced violence from a current partner during pregnancy, 38% experienced violence from that partner for the first time while they were pregnant, 41% experienced violence that did not occur for the first time during pregnancy, and 22% experienced one incident of violence. Including single and multiple occurrences of violence, for a total of 59% of women who experienced violence from a current partner during pregnancy, the violence first occurred during pregnancy. Australian research by Welsh and Weekes found that for the majority of the 400 women in the study, a past history of violence in the relationship was a strong indicator for the violence to continue in some form throughout the pregnancy (Walsh and Weekes, 2004).

Women who experienced violence by a previous partner during pregnancy were less likely to have experienced only one incident of violence (7%), with 47% experiencing violence by the partner for the first time during pregnancy, and 43% experiencing violence that first occurred before pregnancy. Including single and multiple occurrences of violence, for a total of 54% of women who experienced violence from a previous partner during pregnancy, the violence first occurred during pregnancy.

Studies have shown a strong association between experiences of violence and difficulties in pregnancy and childhood (Taft, Watson and Lee). Violence in pregnancy has serious health consequences for the woman and the infant (Walsh and Weekes 2004).

<sup>13</sup> Refers to most recently violent partner, and excludes women who were not living with the partner



**Figure 31. Violence during pregnancy: Whether partner violence began during pregnancy**

#### 4.4 Detailed Tables

Relationship to perpetrator (a)	Males		Females		Persons	
	'000	%	'000	%	'000	%
Father/stepfather	411.9	58.6	411.6	52.8	823.5	55.6
Mother / stepmother	116.8	16.6	267.1	34.3	383.9	25.9
Other known person	142.9	20.3	60.9	7.8	203.8	13.7
Other male relative	*24.8	*3.5	49.1	6.3	73.9	5
Stranger	*23.2	*3.3	18	2.3	41.2	2.8
Acquaintance / neighbour	*21.4	*3.0	*14.2	*1.8	35.5	2.4
Family friend	**6.0	**0.9	19.8	2.5	25.8	1.7
Other female relative	np	np	17.9	2.3	*21.0	*1.4

**Table 29. Experience of physical abuse before age 15: Relationship to perpetrator (Sourced from ABS 2005 Personal Safety Survey Cat No. 4906.0)**

\* estimate has a relative standard error of 25% to 50% and should be used with caution

\*\* estimate has a relative standard error greater than 50% and is considered too unreliable

np not available for publication but included in totals where applicable, unless otherwise

(a) Components may not add to the total as more than one perpetrator may have been involved.

Relationship to perpetrator (a)	Males		Females		Persons	
	'000	%	'000	%	'000	%
Other male relative	55.2	16.4	335.5	35.1	390.7	30.2
Family friend	52.7	15.6	157.7	16.5	210.4	16.3
Acquaintance / neighbour	54.7	16.2	147	15.4	201.8	15.6
Other known person	92	27.3	105.3	11	197.4	15.3
Father/stepfather	*17.0	*5.0	158.1	16.5	175.1	13.5
Stranger	61.9	18.3	81.9	8.6	143.8	11.1
Other female relative	np	np	*9.5	*1.0	*11.1	*0.9
Mother/stepmother	**4.8	**1.4	*6.1	*0.6	*10.9	*0.8

**Table 30. Experience of sexual abuse before age 15: Relationship to perpetrator (Sourced from ABS 2005 Personal Safety Survey Cat No. 4906.0)**

\* estimate has a relative standard error of 25% to 50% and should be used with caution

\*\* estimate has a relative standard error greater than 50% and is considered too unreliable for general use

— nil or rounded to zero (including null cells)

np not available for publication but included in totals where applicable, unless otherwise indicated

(a) Components may not add to the total as more than one perpetrator may have been involved.

	Current partner violence	Previous partner violence
Violence witnessed by children	54,432	406,650
Violence not witnessed by children	33,663	207,682
Do not know if witnessed by children	3,835	28,580
No children in their care during the relationship	68,188	385,331

**Table 31. Number of women who experienced violence by a current or previous male partner by whether violence was witnessed / not witnessed by children**

**Previous partner violence during pregnancy**

*Violence occurred more than once*

Violence occurred for the first time during pregnancy 112,035

Violence did not occur for the first time during pregnancy 122,081

Don't know 5,715

*One incident of violence* 17,751

Total women who experienced previous partner violence during pregnancy 257,582

**Table 32. Previous partner violence during pregnancy: Whether violence occurred for the first time during pregnancy**

<b>Current partner violence during pregnancy</b>	
<i>Violence occurred more than once</i>	
Violence occurred for the first time during pregnancy	8,820
Violence did not occur for the first time during pregnancy	9,522
<i>One incident of violence</i>	5,108
Total women who experienced previous partner violence during pregnancy	23,450

**Table 33. Current partner violence during pregnancy: Whether violence occurred for the first time during pregnancy**

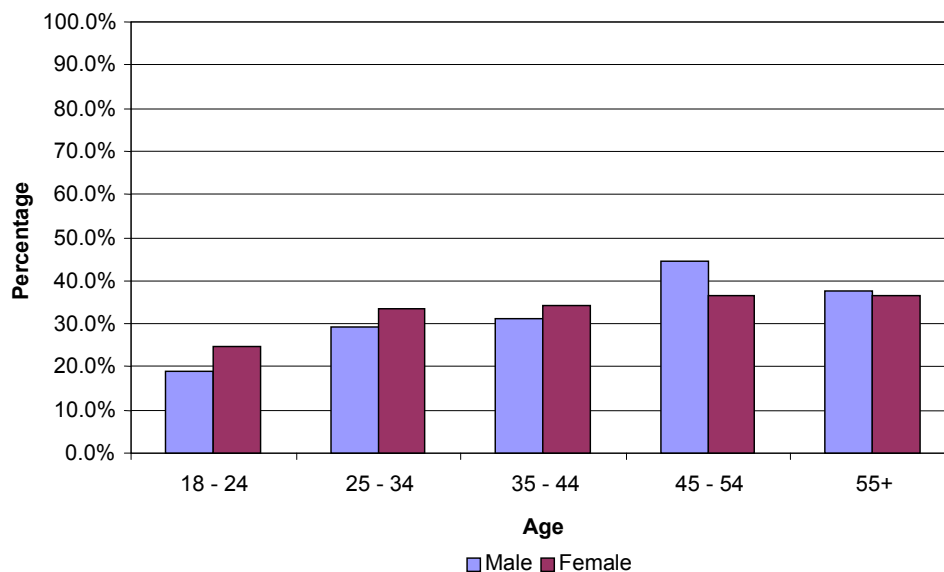
## 5. Response to Violence

### 5.1 Reporting Violence to the Police<sup>14</sup>

Reporting and disclosure of violence represents an important opportunity to hold the perpetrator accountable, receive assistance from services and begin the process of recovery (Astbury 2006). Under-reporting of family and domestic violence is widely recognised. Most incidences of violence and assault are unreported. Previous research has found that most women do not report incidences of violence (Mouzos & Makkai 2004).

Figure 32 shows the percentage of men and women in each age group who reported violence out of all those who had experienced violence in the last twelve months in each age group. Less than half the respondents in all age groups reported the violence to the police. A lower percentage of male victims that experience violence in the last year reported the latest incident of violence to police than females (28% (235,965) compared to 32% (154,201)). Females are more likely to report violence to the police the older they are. This is also true for males, however males aged 55 years and over are less likely to report the incident than males aged 45 to 54 years. The percentage of physical assaults reported to police increased between 1996-2005, irrespective of the relationship with the perpetrators (AIC 2007).

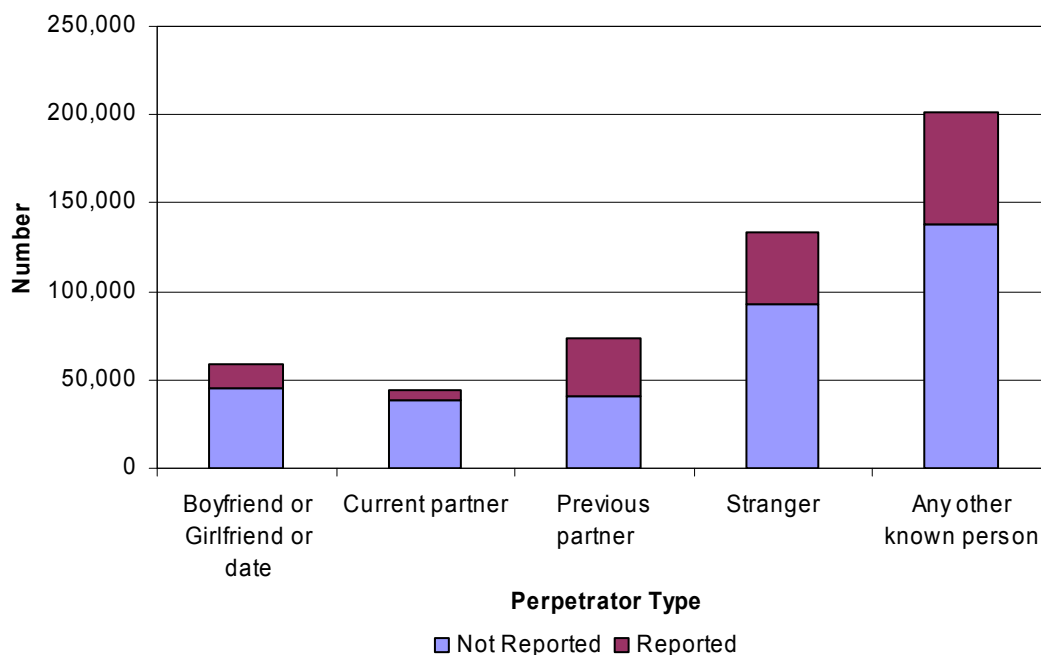
<sup>14</sup> Respondents were asked about the latest incident of each type of violence. Where multiple violence type / perpetrator type incidents have been recorded for one respondent, some figures reflect cases rather than respondents, or aggregated reasons across multiple incidents for that respondent.



**Figure 32. Percentage of persons who experienced violence in the past year that reported the latest incident of violence (in last twelve months) to police, by age.**

Female violence victims are most likely to report violence to police if the perpetrator was a previous partner and least likely to report the incident if the perpetrator is their current partner (44% (32,566) of victims of previous partner violence in the last year reported the most recent incident to police compared to 13% (5,873) of female victims of current partner violence, as shown in Figure 33). In regards to violence against females, sexual assault is least likely to be reported to police and physical assault is most likely to be reported to police (only 19% of female victims of sexual assault in the last twelve months reported the latest incident to police compared to 34% of female physical assault victims).

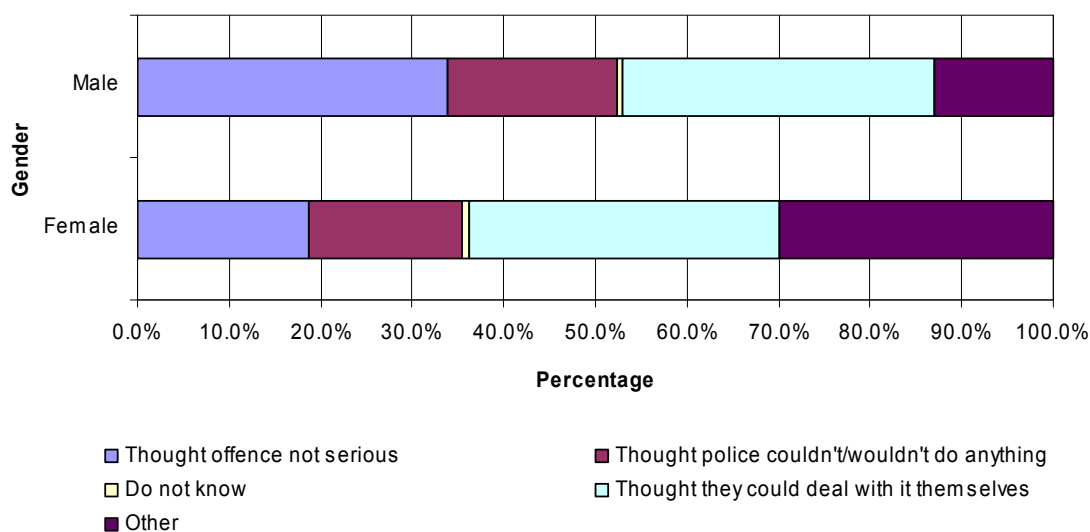




**Figure 33. Women who experienced violence by perpetrator type and reported the latest incident of violence (in last twelve months) to police.**

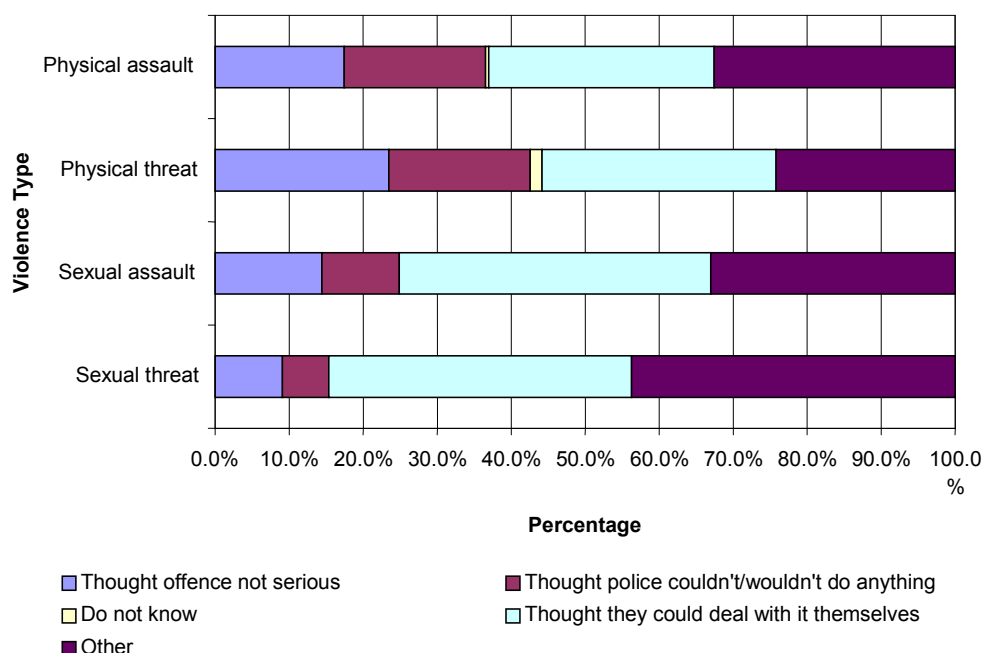
Australian research shows that whether a victim reports an incident to police depends largely on the victim's assessment of the seriousness of the offence. (Lievore 2003; Mouzos & Makkai 2004). There are many personal, cultural and systemic barriers to disclosure. (Lievore 2003) With respect to domestic violence many women will not report incidents due to fear of the perpetrator, feelings of guilt and self blame (Mouzos & Makkai 2004).

Figure 34 shows respondents main reason for not reporting violence to the police. Roughly a third of both males and females did not report the most recent incident of violence in the past year to police as they felt they could deal with it themselves. A higher percentage of male victims of violence than female victims of violence did not report the most recent incident of violence to police because they did not regard it as a serious offence (34% compared to 19%).



**Figure 34. Main reason for not telling police after most recent incident in the last twelve months**

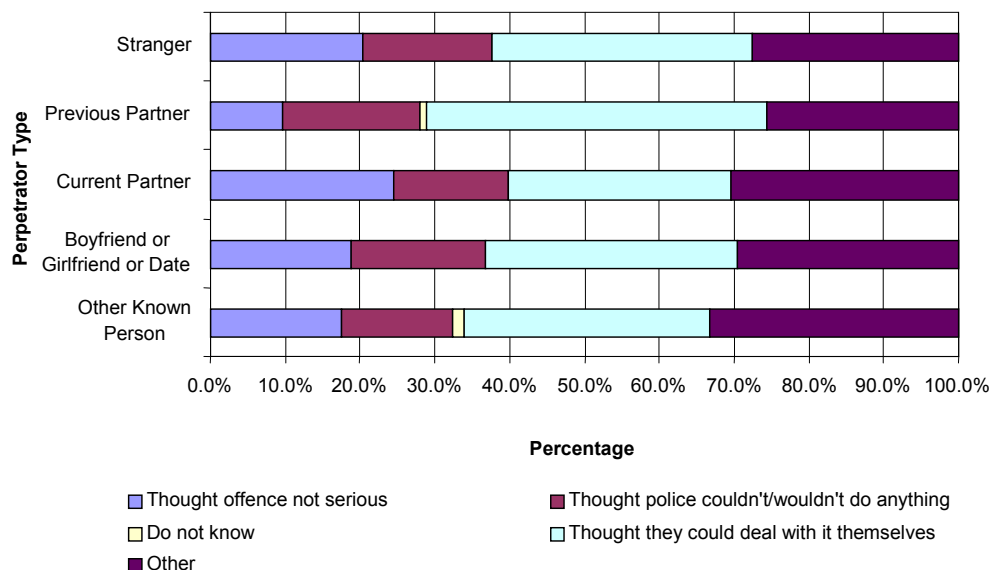
The reasons for not reporting each type of violence to the police are shown in Figure 35 (females only). Roughly a third of females that did not report the most recent incident of violence (in last twelve months) to police for both physical assault and physical threat did not report because they felt they could deal with it themselves (30% of physical assault victims and 32% of physical threat victims). In comparison roughly 40% of sexual assault and sexual threat victims did not report the most recent incident of violence this year to police for this reason (42% of sexual assault victims and 41% of sexual threat victims). Of female victims that did not report the most recent incident of violence to police, a higher percentage of physical violence victims (19% of physical assault victims and 19% of physical threat victims) than sexual violence victims (10% of sexual assault victims and 6% of sexual threat victims) did not tell the police after the most recent incident as they did not think that the police could/would do anything.



**Figure 35. Main reason women did not tell police after the most recent incident of violence in the last twelve months by violence type**

The reasons for not reporting violence by different perpetrator types to the police are shown in Figure 36 (females only). A quarter (25%) of current partner violence towards females was not reported to police because the female victim did not think the offence was serious compared to 10% of previous partner violence towards females. Nearly half (46%) of previous partner violence towards females was not reported because the female victim felt they could deal with it themselves. In comparison, roughly a third of violence towards females from other perpetrator types was not reported to police for the same reason.

These findings are interesting in light of other Australian research that identifies commonalities as to the reasons why women do not report to the Police. Negative perceptions and fear of police and the criminal justice system are a barrier, however other barriers that appear consistently are the belief that the police would not or could not do anything, fear of not being believed or treated with hostility, lack of proof and doubt that the system will provide redress (Lievore, 2003). Of these barriers, only the belief that police would not or could not do anything were possible responses to the PSS. The others would have been included under the heading of 'other' along with fear, humiliation, expectation they would not be believed etc.



**Figure 36. Main reason women did not tell police after the most recent incident of violence in the last twelve months by perpetrator type**

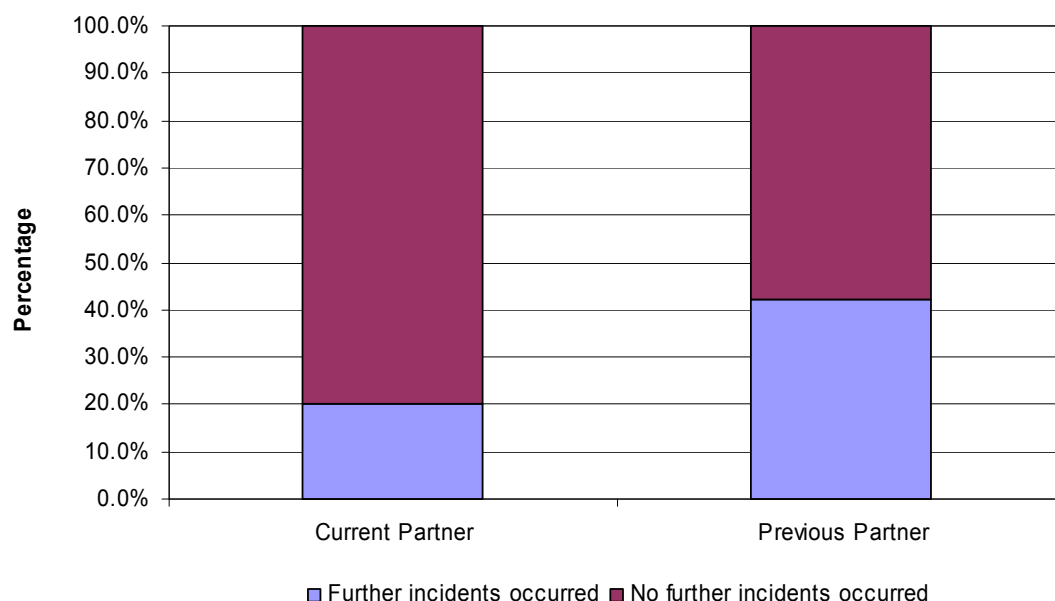
## 5.2 Restraining/Violence Orders

As shown in Table 34, 10% of women who had experienced current partner violence, and 25% of women who had experienced previous partner violence had taken out a restraining / violence order against a partner. Women in the youngest and oldest age categories (18-24 and 55+) were least likely to have obtained a restraining/violence order against a previous partner (21%), whereas 30% of women aged 25-34 who had experienced violence by a previous partner had taken out a restraining / violence order.

	Age	Restraining/violence order taken out	Total in Category Experienced Violence	% that took out a restraining / violence order
Current partner violence	18-24	483	5,401	9%
	25-34	3,336	28,185	12%
	35-44	2,868	38,335	7%
	45-54	3,564	45,981	8%
	55+	5,836	42,216	14%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>16,086</b>	<b>160,118</b>	<b>10%</b>
Previous partner violence	18-24	13,054	61,825	21%
	25-34	61,814	203,737	30%
	35-44	82,054	284,987	29%
	45-54	67,065	271,740	25%
	55+	62,825	305,564	21%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>286,812</b>	<b>1,127,853</b>	<b>25%</b>

**Table 34. Percentage of women who experienced partner violence that had ever taken out a restraining/violence order against a partner**

Many incidents of violence occurred after a restraining / violence order had been obtained. As shown in Figure 37, of the 16,086 women who had experienced current partner violence and taken out a restraining / violence order, 3, 216 (20%) experienced further incidents of violence after the order was issued. Of the 286,812 women who had experienced previous partner violence and taken out a restraining / violence order, 120,913 (42%) experienced further incidents of violence.

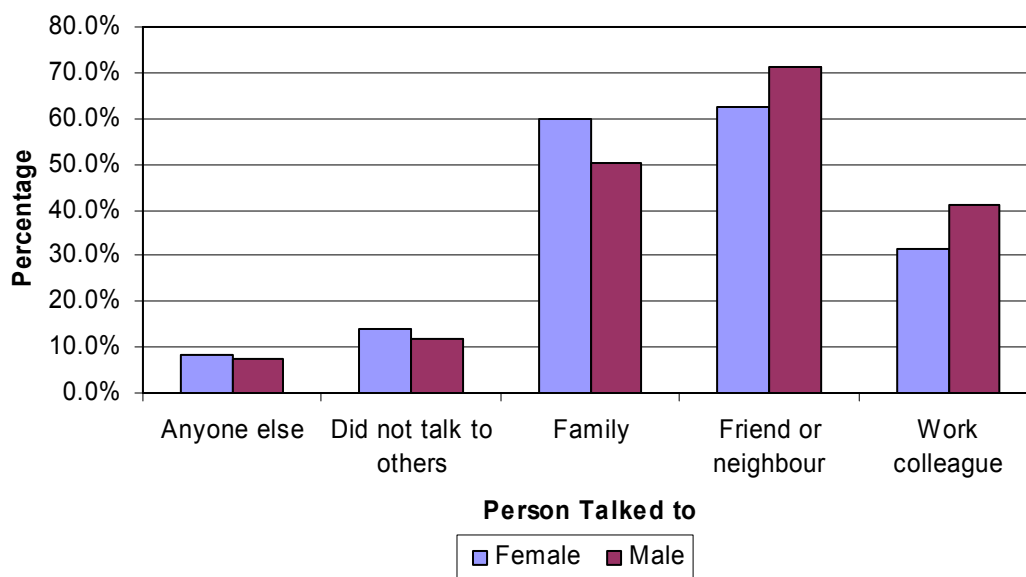


**Figure 37. Partner violence: Percentage of women who had obtained a restraining / violence order who experienced further violence**

### 5.3 Social Support<sup>15</sup>

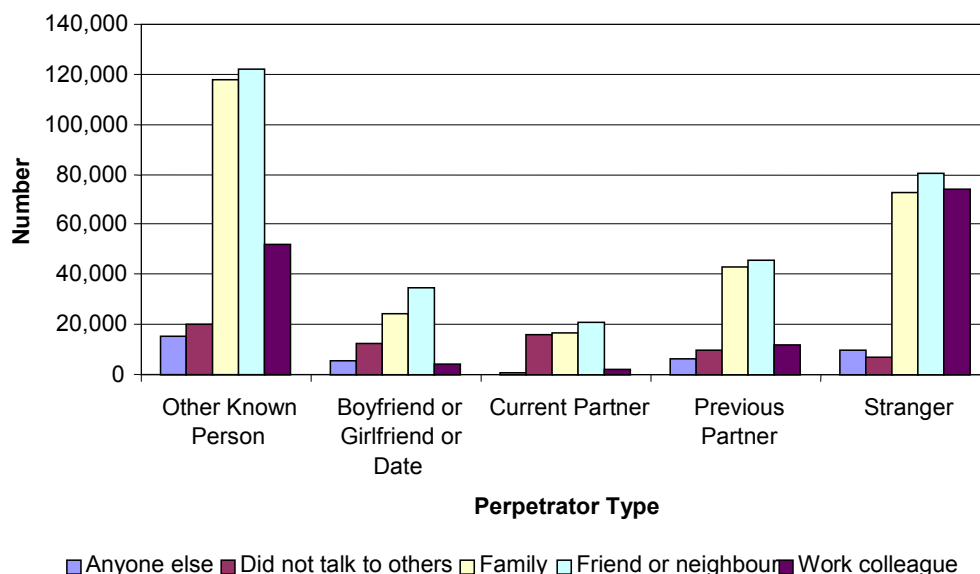
The majority of men and women who experienced violence in the twelve months prior to the survey told friends/neighbours about the most recent incident of violence (see Figure 38). In total, 63% (277,426) of female violence victims and 71% (575,977) male violence victims told friends/neighbours about the most recent of violence. A higher percentage of female violence victims than male violence victims discussed the most recent incident of violence with family members (60% (264,935) compared to 50% (40,523)).

<sup>15</sup> This section includes many multiple response items, as people may seek social support from more than one type of person. In addition, responses may be included from people who have experienced multiple types/incidents of violence.



**Figure 38. Percentage of persons who experienced violence in the last twelve months who talked to each type of person about most recent incident**

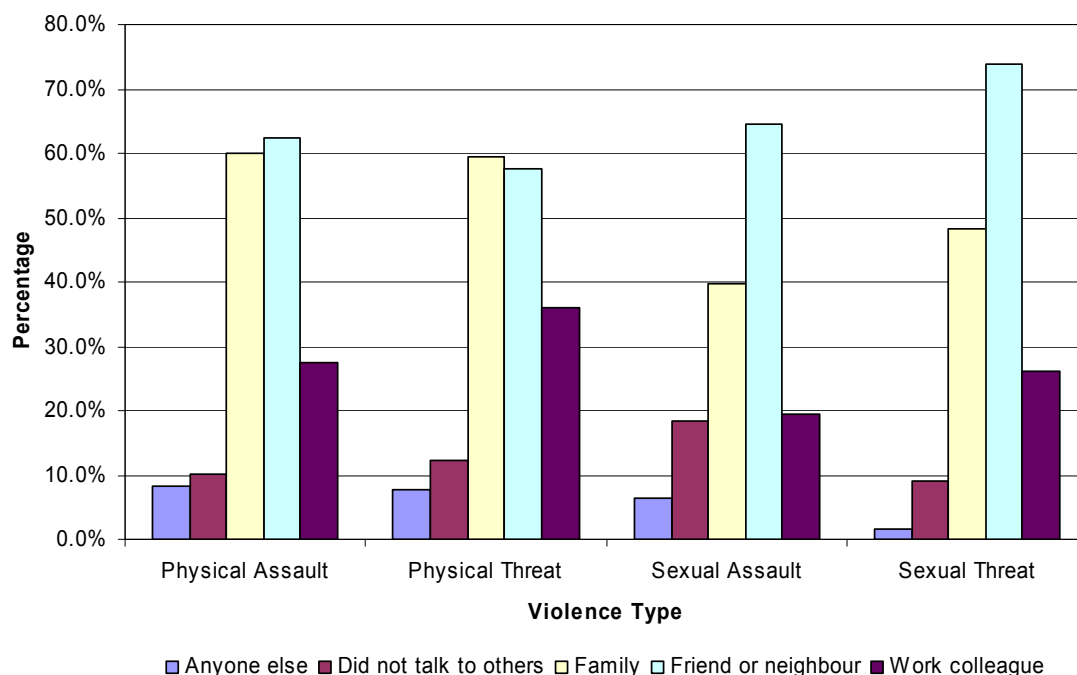
Social support has been shown to be critical in mediating outcomes for women (Astbury, 2006). Figure 39 shows whom women that had experienced violence in the last twelve months talked to about the most recent incident, by perpetrator type. For all perpetrator types, the number of females who told friends or neighbours is consistently higher than any other types of people told. The number of female violence victims that told family members was similar to those that told friends or neighbours for all perpetrator types except for boyfriend/girlfriend/date for which roughly 10,000 more people told friends/neighbours than family. When the perpetrator was a stranger a much higher proportion of females told work colleagues after the most recent incident of violence than for all other perpetrator types. A higher proportion of female violence victims did not tell anyone about the most recent incident of violence (in the past year) if the perpetrator was their current partner than for all other perpetrator types.



**Figure 39. Number of women who experienced violence in the past year who talked to each type of person about most recent incident by perpetrator type**

Figure 40 shows who women talked to about the most recent incident of violence. For physical violence (physical assault or physical threat) similar percentages of female victims told family members or friends/neighbours after the most recent incident of violence in the past year. In comparison for sexual violence (sexual assault or sexual threat) a higher percentage of females told friends/neighbours than family members. Nearly 20% of sexual assault victims did not talk to anyone after the most recent incident of violence. This is the highest percentage for all violence types.

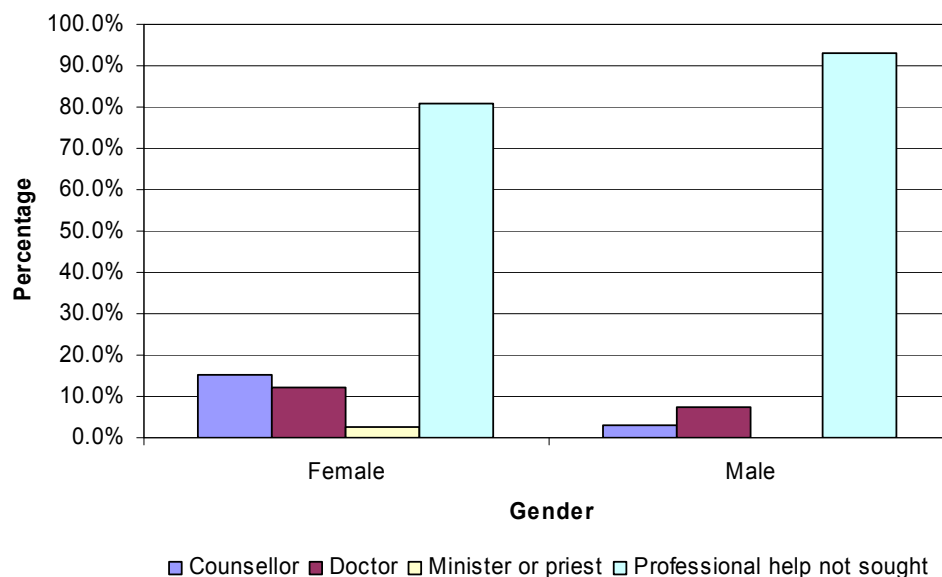




**Figure 40. Percentage of women who told others after the most recent incident of violence (in the last twelve months) by violence type.**

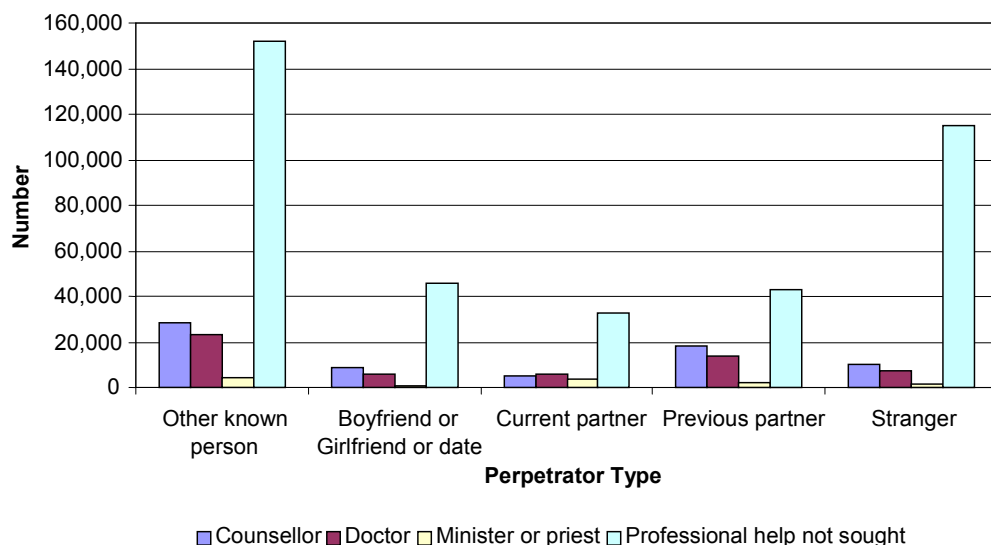
## 5.4 Seeking Professional Help

Figure 41 shows the percentage of men and women who sought professional help after the most recent incident of violence. 7% of male victims of violence sought professional help after the most recent incident of violence in the past year (93% of male violence victims did not seek professional help) compared to 19% of females (81% of female violence victims did not seek professional help). Of the victims that sought professional help after the most recent incident of violence in the past year, a higher percentage of female victims sought help from counsellors than doctors, where as for males a higher percentage sought help from doctors than counsellors. The preference for counsellors among women is consistent with other research which found that women who were victims of sexual violence found counsellors more empathic and helpful over medical and mental health services (Astbury 2006).



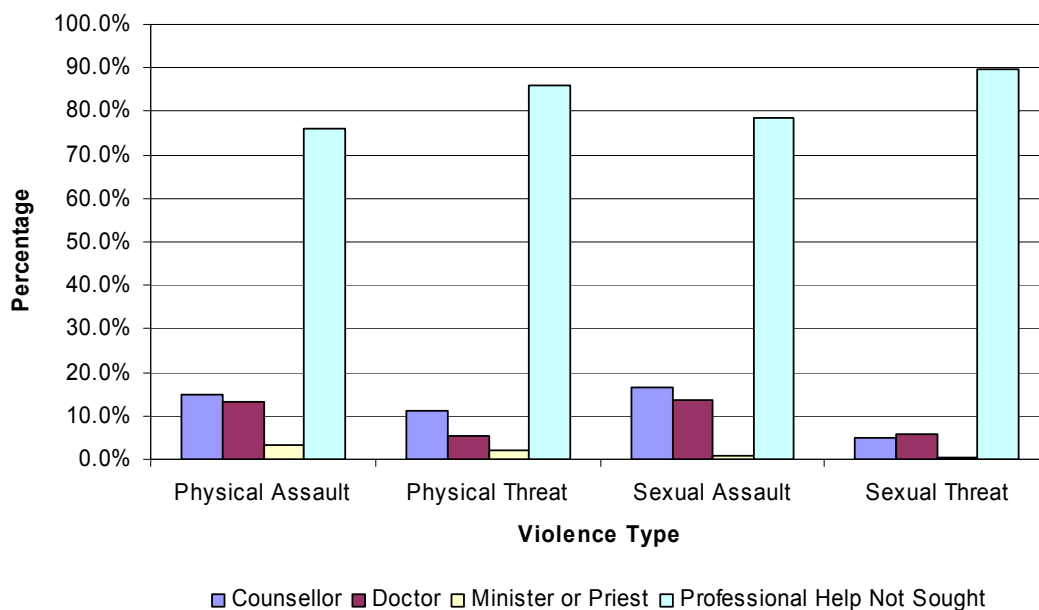
**Figure 41. Percentage of persons who have experienced violence who sought professional help after the most recent incident of violence (in the last twelve months) by gender**

The type of professional help sought by women who had experienced violence in the last twelve months is shown in Figure 42, for each perpetrator type. For female victims of violence in the past year, for all perpetrator types except for current partner, the number of females who sought help from a counsellor after the most recent incident of violence is higher than the number who sought help from a doctor after the most recent incident of violence. A higher proportion of female violence victims sought help from a minister or priest after the most recent incident of violence from a current partner than for other perpetrator types.



**Figure 42. Number of women who have experienced violence in the past year who sought professional help after the most recent incident of violence (in the last twelve months) by perpetrator type**

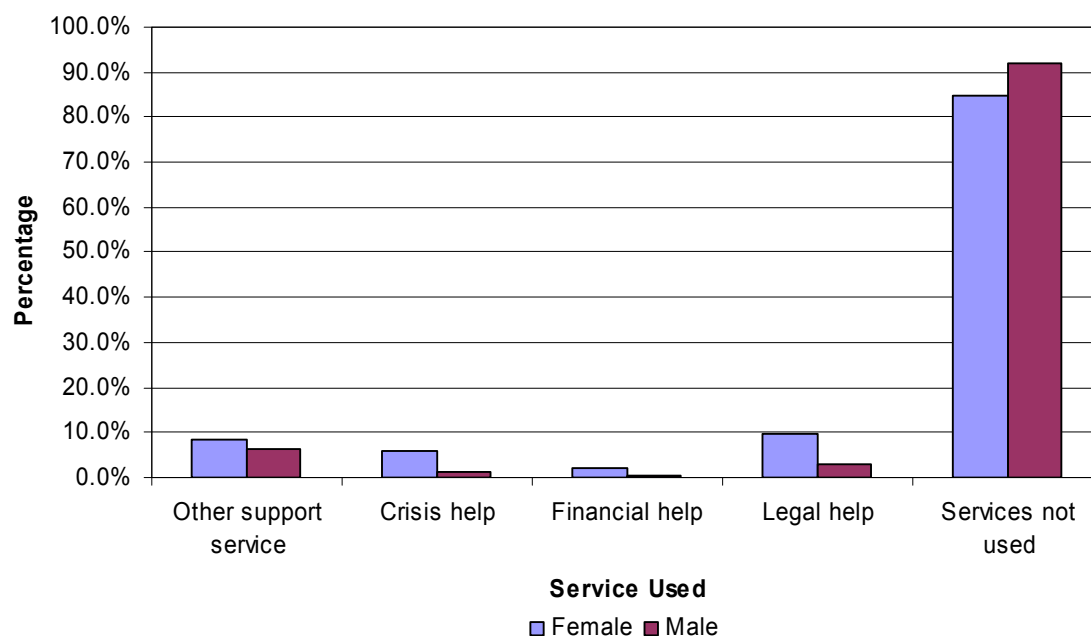
Figure 43 shows the percentage of women who had experienced each type of violence that sought each type of professional help. Of women who sought professional help after the most recent incident of violence, the percentage seeking each type of help was similar for victims of physical assault and victims of sexual assault. A lower percentage of female victims of sexual threat sought help from counsellors than female victims of other violence types (physical assault, physical threat and sexual assault). For all violence types a higher percentage of females sought help from counsellors than doctors except for sexual threat victims. Professional help was least likely to be sought if the female was a victim of sexual threat (91% of females did not seek professional help after the most recent incident of sexual threat in the past year).



**Figure 43. Percentage of women who sought professional help after the most recent incident of violence in past year by violence type**

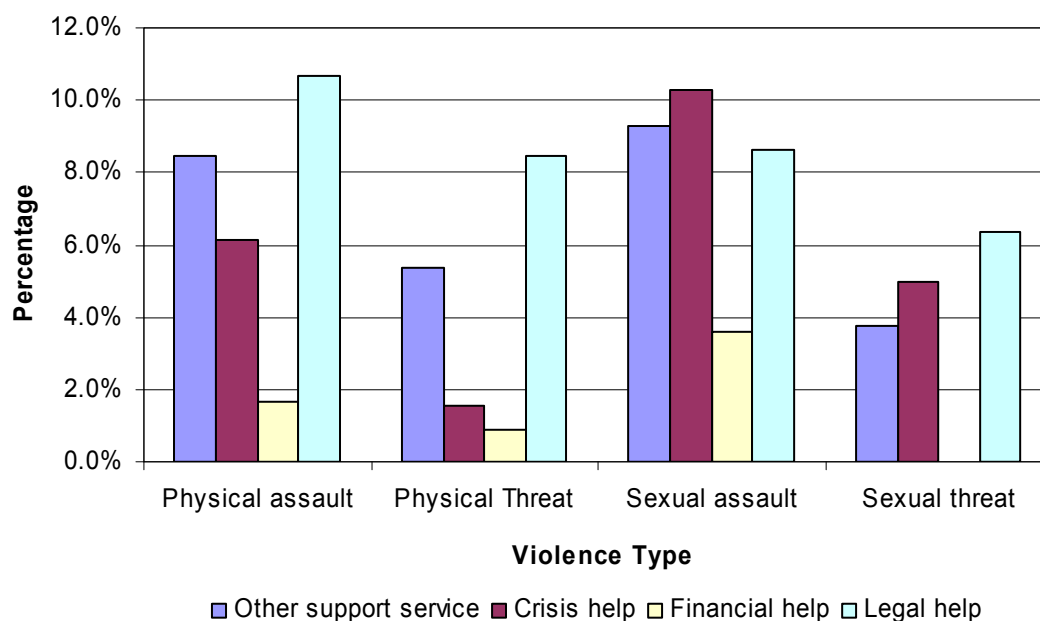
## 5.5 Accessing Services

As can be seen in Figure 44, the majority of people who had experienced violence in the previous twelve months had not used any services in relation to the violence. Men were less likely to access all services types compared to women. This is consistent with other Australian research which found that few women who experienced violence sought specialist assistance (Mouzous and Makkai 2004).



**Figure 44. Percentage of persons who had experienced violence in last twelve months who used each service**

Figure 45 shows a breakdown of the percentage of women that have experienced each type of violence who accessed services (and further detail is provided in Table 35). Of women who experienced violence in the previous twelve months, services were not used for 80% of physical assault victims, 87% of physical threat/attempted assault victims, 82% of sexual assault victims and 91% of sexual threat victims. Women who had experienced sexual assault were most likely to access crisis support (10%), legal help (9%) or other support services including telephone help lines (9%). For physical assault victims, legal help was the most common service used (11%). Legal help was also used by 8% of women who experienced physical threat/attempted assault, and 6% who experienced sexual threat.



**Figure 45. Percentage of women who experienced each type of violence in last twelve months who accessed each service after latest incident of violence**

Services Used	Type of Violence	Count	Total Experienced Violence Type	% Used Service
Crisis help	Physical assault	14,911	242,001	6%
	Physical threat / attempted assault	2,544	162,387	2%
	Sexual assault	10,474	101,618	10%
	Sexual threat	1,741	34,885	5%
Financial help	Physical assault	4,080	242,001	2%
	Physical threat / attempted assault	1,467	162,387	1%
	Sexual assault	3,670	101,618	4%
Legal help	Physical assault	25,854	242,001	11%
	Physical threat / attempted assault	13,765	162,387	8%
	Sexual assault	8,750	101,618	9%
	Sexual threat	2,219	34,885	6%
Any other support service including telephone help line	Physical assault	20,477	242,001	8%
	Physical threat / attempted assault	8,678	162,387	5%
	Sexual assault	9,427	101,618	9%
	Sexual threat	1,312	34,885	4%
Services not used	Physical assault	194,297	242,001	80%
	Physical threat / attempted assault	141,780	162,387	87%
	Sexual assault	83,026	101,618	82%
	Sexual threat	31,616	34,885	91%

**Table 35. Percentage of women who experienced each type of violence in last twelve months who accessed each service**

## 5.6 Detailed Tables - Reasons For Not Using Services

<b>Females Only: Reasons For Not Using Crisis Services</b>	<b>Physical assault</b>	<b>Physical threat or attempted physical assault</b>	<b>Sexual assault</b>	<b>Sexual threat</b>
Did not know of any services	13,765	6,147	2,389	3,304
Did not need or want service	2,197	2,955	2,985	0
Did not want to ask for help	16,111	7,958	6,667	5,979
Don't know	48,102	52,198	13,240	2,475
Felt they could deal with it themselves	76,095	53,128	45,143	13,698
Not serious enough to seek help	50,384	23,187	18,471	7,153
Other reasons	47,189	32,060	28,171	5,290
Received help from family or friends	57,636	24,023	19,401	13,377

**Table 36. Respondents who had experienced violence and did not use crisis services after most recent incident: Reasons for not using crisis service by violence type (Females only)**

<b>Males Only: Reasons For Not Using Crises Services</b>	<b>Physical assault</b>	<b>Physical threat or attempted physical assault</b>	<b>Sexual assault</b>	<b>Sexual threat</b>
Did not know of any services	13,994	798	0	0
Did not need or want service	0	3,725	1,910	0
Did not want to ask for help	22,594	8,939		0
Don't know	181,830	171,750	16,478	0
Felt they could deal with it themselves	131,366	101,172	20,883	0
Not serious enough to seek help	155,342	90,370	4,764	2,057
Other reasons	52,515	36,581	10,437	3,609
Received help from family or friends	37,185	37,656	3,845	3,609

**Table 37. Respondents who had experienced violence and did not use crisis services after most recent incident: Reasons for not using crisis service by violence type (males only)**

<b>Females Only: Reasons for not using legal services after most recent incident</b>	<b>Physical assault</b>	<b>Physical threat or attempted physical assault</b>	<b>Sexual assault</b>	<b>Sexual threat</b>
Did not know of any services	12,339	3,923	2,987	3,511
Did not need or want service	2,074	3,197	1,321	0
Did not want to ask for help	7,127	6,349	3,116	1,448
Don't know	73,602	72,713	25,238	8,652
Felt they could deal with it themselves	48,628	35,725	24,478	5,350
Not serious enough to seek help	49,521	18,972	19,266	5,832
Other reasons	38,680	16,740	25,246	3,756
Received help from family or friends	24,788	7,084	8,196	6,761

**Table 38. Respondents who had experienced violence and did not use legal services after most recent incident: Reasons for not using legal service by violence type (females only)**

<b>Males Only: Reasons for not using legal services after most recent incident</b>	<b>Physical assault</b>	<b>Physical threat or attempted physical assault</b>	<b>Sexual assault</b>	<b>Sexual threat</b>
Did not know of any services	2,604	0	0	0
Did not need or want service	0	713	0	0
Did not want to ask for help	9,528	11,739	1,910	0
Don't know	214,125	196,068	19,014	0
Felt they could deal with it themselves	94,812	73,895	13,368	0
Not serious enough to seek help	128,133	80,940	3,930	2,057
Other reasons	49,900	47,322	11,984	0
Received help from family or friends	29,241	22,556	0	0

**Table 39. Respondents who had experienced violence and did not use legal services after most recent incident: Reasons for not using legal service by violence type (males only)**



<b>Females Only: Reasons for not using financial services after most recent incident</b>	<b>Physical assault</b>	<b>Physical threat or attempted physical assault</b>	<b>Sexual assault</b>	<b>Sexual threat</b>
Did not know of any services	18,115	3,107	3,488	4,042
Did not need or want service	1,906	6,579	2,185	190
Did not want to ask for help	7,487	4,354	1,555	728
Don't know	112,007	87,122	43,764	12,386
Felt they could deal with it themselves	40,033	32,454	16,215	6,371
Not serious enough to seek help	37,048	19,755	14,939	6,816
Other reasons	30,785	13,947	18,030	4,561
Received help from family or friends	21,951	6,435	5,749	2,557

**Table 40. Respondents who had experienced violence and did not use financial services after most recent incident: Reasons for not using financial service by violence type (females only)**

<b>Males Only: Reasons for not using financial services after most recent incident</b>	<b>Physical assault</b>	<b>Physical threat or attempted physical assault</b>	<b>Sexual assault</b>	<b>Sexual threat</b>
Did not know of any services	5,976	690	2,447	0
Did not need or want service	508	713	0	0
Did not want to ask for help	10,921	10,678	1,263	0
Don't know	259,822	241,580	28,527	0
Felt they could deal with it themselves	76,219	67,554	7,291	0
Not serious enough to seek help	96,498	67,939	2,403	2,057
Other reasons	36,978	26,653	11,142	0
Received help from family or friends	18,036	11,038	0	3,609

**Table 41. Respondents who had experienced violence and did not use financial services after most recent incident: Reasons for not using financial service by violence type (males only)**

<b>Females Only: Reasons for not using other services after most recent incident</b>	<b>Physical assault</b>	<b>Physical threat or attempted physical assault</b>	<b>Sexual assault</b>	<b>Sexual threat</b>
Did not know of any services	11,568	780	2,235	3,283
Did not need or want service	2,856	4,871	1,489	0
Did not want to ask for help	6,604	6,008	7,612	728
Don't know	75,586	65,560	26,562	5,810
Felt they could deal with it themselves	60,804	43,082	21,613	4,938
Not serious enough to seek help	31,661	17,882	11,966	6,308
Other reasons	38,041	17,501	21,846	5,903
Received help from family or friends	37,064	12,377	13,201	10,700

**Table 42. Respondents who had experienced violence and did not use other services after most recent incident: Reasons for not using other service by violence type (females only)**

<b>Males Only: Reasons for not using other services after most recent incident</b>	<b>Physical assault</b>	<b>Physical threat or attempted physical assault</b>	<b>Sexual assault</b>	<b>Sexual threat</b>
Did not know of any services	5,938	12,484	0	0
Did not need or want service	0	1,883	0	0
Did not want to ask for help	5,129	6,766	0	0
Don't know	210,559	219,103	24,807	0
Felt they could deal with it themselves	99,946	70,436	11,432	0
Not serious enough to seek help	107,968	75,090	1,129	783
Other reasons	41,901	21,725	8,695	3,609
Received help from family or friends	19,865	13,236	0	0

**Table 43. Respondents who had experienced violence and did not use other services after most recent incident: Reasons for not using other service by violence type (males only)**

<b>Females Only: Reasons For Not Using Crisis Services</b>	<b>Any other known person</b>	<b>Boyfriend or girlfriend or date</b>	<b>Current partner</b>	<b>Previous partner</b>	<b>Stranger</b>
Did not know of any services	7,944	4,095	380	4,681	4,939
Did not need or want service	3,094	2,332	910	327	1,474
Did not want to ask for help	16,493	8,600	2,655	2,175	3,908
Don't know	40,476	7,472	7,046	8,142	44,948
Felt they could deal with it themselves	65,861	24,897	18,175	28,522	35,702
Not serious enough to seek help	30,796	11,546	9,247	10,913	30,747
Other reasons	50,768	10,349	15,882	13,193	20,745
Received help from family or friends	39,908	14,159	5,911	20,079	23,747

**Table 44. Respondents who had experienced violence and did not use crisis services after most recent incident: Reasons for not using crisis service by perpetrator type (females only)**

<b>Males Only: Reasons For Not Using Crisis Services</b>	<b>Any other known person</b>	<b>Boyfriend or girlfriend or date</b>	<b>Current partner</b>	<b>Previous partner</b>	<b>Stranger</b>
Did not need or want service	713	1,910	0	0	3,012
Did not want to ask for help	11,428	2,487	0	693	16,923
Don't know	98,004	11,832	1,548	5,000	236,278
Felt they could deal with it themselves	101,750	13,151	1,548	7,039	124,129
know of any services	1,184	0	0	798	13,608
Not serious enough to seek help	92,111	5,309	1,910	1,129	151,236
Other reasons	20,692	8,019	0	4,063	60,106
Received help from family or friends	37,977	1,537	0	0	42,782

**Table 45. Respondents who had experienced violence and did not use crisis services after most recent incident: Reasons for not using crisis service by perpetrator type (males only)**

<b>Females Only: Reasons for not using legal services after most recent incident</b>	<b>Any other known person</b>	<b>Boyfriend or girlfriend or date</b>	<b>Current partner</b>	<b>Previous partner</b>	<b>Stranger</b>
Did not know of any services	7,389	4,369	1,248	2,668	3,520
Did not need or want service	2,897	1,370	1,009	0	1,316
Did not want to ask for help	4,507	6,677	2,237	1,393	671
Don't know	58,046	11,056	16,309	13,951	68,824
Felt they could deal with it themselves	38,645	20,685	11,562	17,836	19,869
Not serious enough to seek help	29,021	12,191	7,315	9,532	25,140
Other reasons	36,905	10,868	9,510	12,431	11,772
Received help from family or friends	22,172	6,779	1,543	4,958	8,838

**Table 46. Respondents who had experienced violence and did not use legal services after most recent incident: Reasons for not using legal service by perpetrator type (females only)**

<b>Males Only: Reasons for not using legal services after most recent incident</b>	<b>Any other known person</b>	<b>Boyfriend or girlfriend or date</b>	<b>Current partner</b>	<b>Previous partner</b>	<b>Stranger</b>
Did not know of any services	1,184	0	0	0	1,419
Did not need or want service	713	0	0	0	0
Did not want to ask for help	6,071	5,253	0	0	11,852
Don't know	128,967	11,426	4,988	3,164	258,568
Felt they could deal with it themselves	76,652	7,233	1,548	3,705	84,232
Not serious enough to seek help	79,162	7,551	1,910	1,129	124,322
Other reasons	24,510	8,019	0	4,757	64,868
Received help from family or friends	26,022	798	0	0	24,977

**Table 47. Respondents who had experienced violence and did not use legal services after most recent incident: Reasons for not using legal service by perpetrator type (males only)**

<b>Females Only: Reasons for not using financial services after most recent incident</b>	<b>Any other known person</b>	<b>Boyfriend or girlfriend or date</b>	<b>Current partner</b>	<b>Previous partner</b>	<b>Stranger</b>
Did not want to ask for help	0	8,548	380	0	0
Received help from family or friends	0	0	1,240	0	0
Did not know of any services	9,073	3,952	2,861	6,774	1,097
Did not need or want service	5,209	2,463	967	478	1,744
Did not want to ask for help	3,266	0	0	728	0
Don't know	87,435	19,024	22,222	30,006	75,726
Felt they could deal with it themselves	27,239	14,604	9,267	17,561	16,345
Not serious enough to seek help	23,823	9,362	3,960	5,711	25,943
Other reasons	0	8,548	380	0	0
Received help from family or friends	0	0	1,240	0	0

**Table 48. Respondents who had experienced violence and did not use financial services after most recent incident: Reasons for not using financial service by perpetrator type (females only)**

<b>Males Only: Reasons for not using financial services after most recent incident</b>	<b>Any other known person</b>	<b>Boyfriend or girlfriend or date</b>	<b>Current partner</b>	<b>Previous partner</b>	<b>Stranger</b>
Did not know of any services	1,872	0	0	0	7,242
Did not need or want service	713	0	0	0	508
Did not want to ask for help	7,440	3,343	0	0	12,079
Don't know	162,737	13,766	6,536	7,869	308,470
Felt they could deal with it themselves	59,814	8,306	0	5,662	68,578
Not serious enough to seek help	60,317	7,586	1,910	1,129	98,952
Other reasons	12,049	8,019	0	4,063	43,590
Received help from family or friends	16,928	0	0	0	15,755

**Table 49. Respondents who had experienced violence and did not use financial services after most recent incident: Reasons for not using financial service by perpetrator type (males only)**

<b>Females Only: Reasons for not using other services after most recent incident</b>	<b>Any other known person</b>	<b>Boyfriend or girlfriend or date</b>	<b>Current partner</b>	<b>Previous partner</b>	<b>Stranger</b>
Did not know of any services	5,201	4,109	1,084	3,869	2,247
Did not need or want service	4,116	2,463	795	677	1,165
Did not want to ask for help	8,009	6,237	1,246	2,541	0
Don't know	60,802	13,069	10,999	16,325	60,096
Felt they could deal with it themselves	40,666	22,710	13,539	20,467	24,750
Not serious enough to seek help	18,926	7,436	5,594	5,119	25,000
Other reasons	35,264	7,354	10,548	16,116	12,098
Received help from family or friends	28,144	8,410	3,212	13,094	14,213

**Table 50. Respondents who had experienced violence and did not use other services after most recent incident: Reasons for not using other service by perpetrator type (females only)**

<b>Males Only: Reasons for not using other services after most recent incident</b>	<b>Any other known person</b>	<b>Boyfriend or girlfriend or date</b>	<b>Current partner</b>	<b>Previous partner</b>	<b>Stranger</b>
Did not know of any services	5,595	0	0	798	12,028
Did not need or want service	1,175	0	0	0	708
Did not want to ask for help	1,099	0	0	0	10,797
Don't know	140,710	12,263	6,536	4,595	267,953
Felt they could deal with it themselves	73,232	13,151	0	7,270	77,362
Not serious enough to seek help	68,852	8,176	1,910	1,129	105,900
Other reasons	21,158	8,019	0	4,063	35,221
Received help from family or friends	16,338	2,218	0	867	13,677

**Table 51. Respondents who had experienced violence and did not use other services after most recent incident: Reasons for not using other service by perpetrator type (males only)**

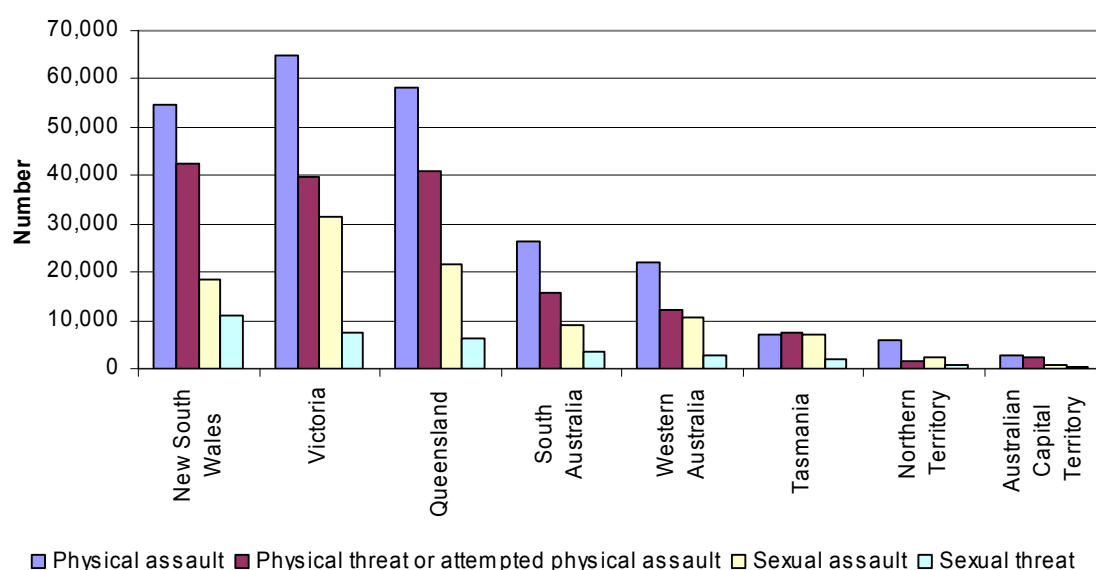
## 6. State Level Estimates

State level estimates and comparisons are of key importance. There are two issues that affect the quality of state level estimates that are available from the RADL. The first issue is that the standard errors are likely to be high for most estimates due to the small samples when considered at state level. This is of particular relevance for the smaller states.

The second issue is related to the perturbing of the unit record data that the ABS conducts to maintain the confidentiality of all respondents. One aspect of the perturbation is to randomly alter the state of usual residence for a small number of respondents (typically those that are more likely to be identified due to having extreme values or unique responses). As a result of this, the state level estimates obtained via the RADL cannot be reconciled to state level estimates published by the ABS, who use unperturbed data.

The results of the following state level comparisons should be considered with these quality issues in mind.

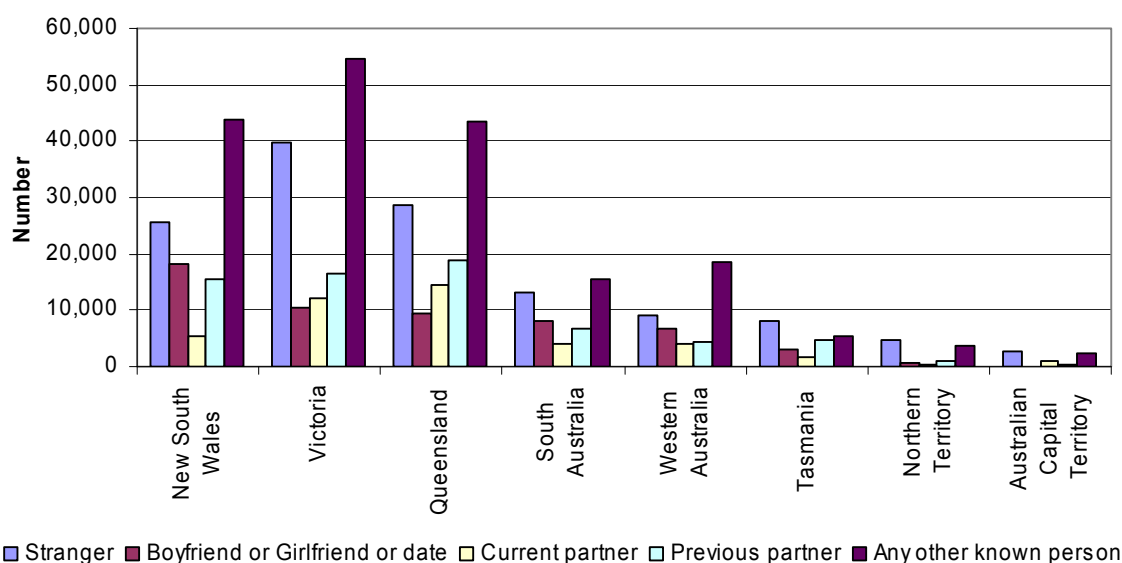
Across most states and territories, women who experienced violence in the last 12 months were more likely to have experienced physical assault, followed by attempted physical assault, sexual assault and are least likely to have experienced sexual threat (see Figure 46). The exceptions to this pattern are Tasmania, Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory, however the numbers for these states/territories are low and subject to a high degree of error.



**Figure 46. Females who experienced violence in the last 12 months by their state of usual residence.**

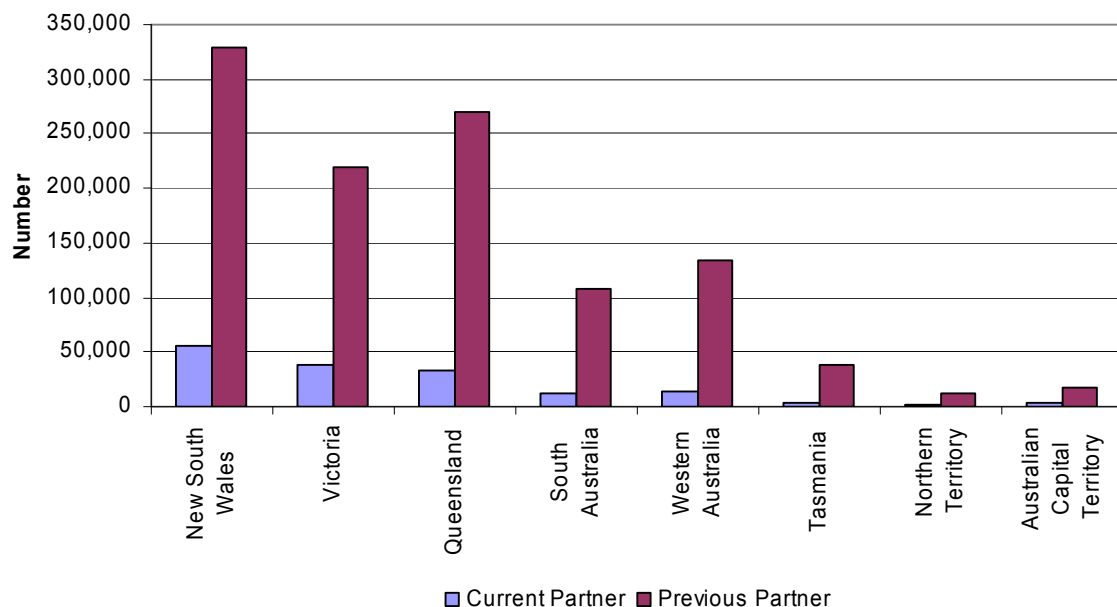


For each of the six states, the most common perpetrator type for females who experienced violence in the last 12 months is any other know person, followed by a stranger (see Figure 47). In New South Wales, South Australia and Tasmania, the next most common type of perpetrator is boyfriend, girlfriend or date, followed by previous partner and then current partner. In Victoria and Queensland, the next most common type of perpetrator is previous partner, followed by current partner and then boyfriend, girlfriend or date. However, some of these numbers are very low and comparisons should be treated with cautioned.

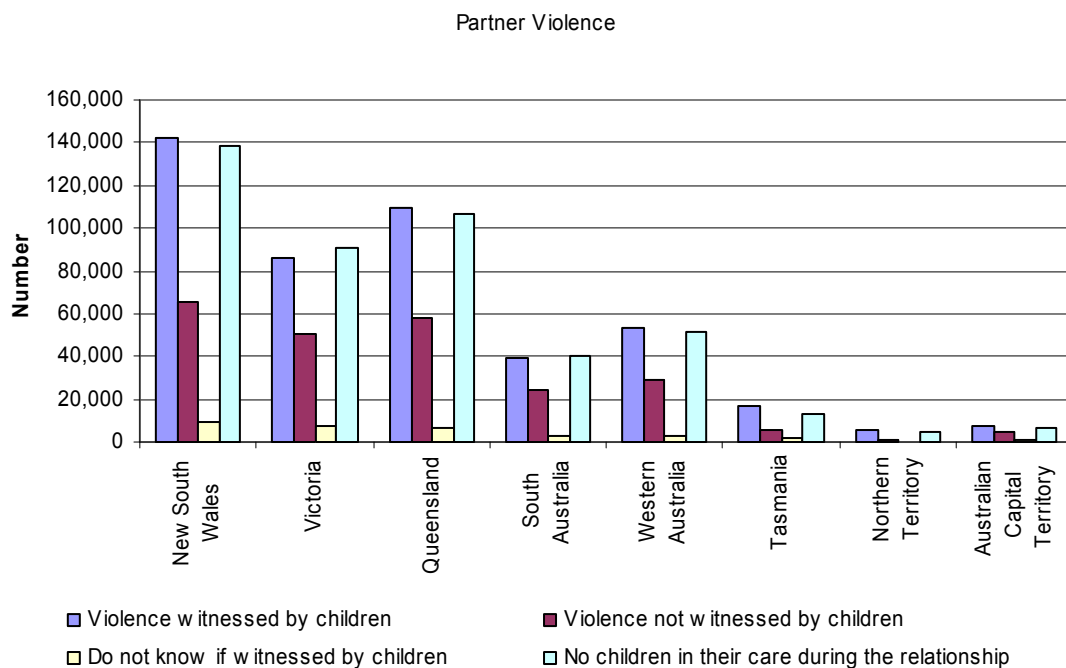


**Figure 47. Females who experienced violence in the last 12 months by perpetrator type.**

In all states and territories, females are substantially more likely to have experienced violence by a previous partner than a current partner (see Figure 48). Whether or not partner violence towards women has been witnessed by children is also similar across the state and territories (see Figure 49).



**Figure 48. Females who have experienced violence by a partner.**



**Figure 49. Whether partner violence towards women has been witnessed by children.**

## 6.1 Detailed Tables

State of Usual Residence	Total Females
New South Wales	2,567,020
Victoria	1,942,566
Queensland	1,470,047
South Australia	598,861
Western Australia	745,585
Tasmania	204,845
Northern Territory	54,833
Australian Capital Territory	109,377

**Table 52. Total Females by state of usual residence.**

State of Usual Residence	Women who experienced violence in last 12 months
New South Wales	103,882
Victoria	123,302
Queensland	99,804
South Australia	42,208
Western Australia	39,498
Tasmania	19,084
Northern Territory	9,911
Australian Capital Territory	6,080

**Table 53. Females who experienced violence in last 12 months by state of usual residence.**

State of Usual Residence	Physical assault	Physical threat or attempted physical assault	Sexual assault	Sexual threat
New South Wales	54,666	42,570	18,489	11,010
Victoria	64,855	39,544	31,354	7,665
Queensland	58,243	40,764	21,782	6,194
South Australia	26,258	15,881	9,206	3,700
Western Australia	22,189	12,257	10,636	2,816
Tasmania	7,022	7,310	7,233	2,146
Northern Territory	6,017	1,717	2,286	845
Australian Capital Territory	2,751	2,345	632	510

**Table 54. Females who experienced violence in last 12 months by state of usual residence and type of violence experienced.**

State of Usual Residence	Current partner	Previous partner	Boyfriend or girlfriend or date	Any other known person	Stranger
New South Wales	5,508	15,439	18,034	43,659	25,452
Victoria	12,157	16,393	10,378	54,483	39,654
Queensland	14,534	18,774	9,459	43,569	28,676
South Australia	3,911	6,618	8,217	15,569	13,186
Western Australia	3,928	4,289	6,842	18,577	9,138
Tasmania	1,677	4,612	3,054	5,383	8,159
Northern Territory	343	1,174	766	3,778	4,665
Australian Capital Territory	866	316	158	2,352	2,546

**Table 55. Females who experienced violence in last 12 months by state of usual residence and perpetrator type.**

State of Usual Residence	Current partner	Previous partner
New South Wales	55,377	329,336
Victoria	37,607	219,535
Queensland	33,456	269,966
South Australia	12,395	17,934
Western Australia	13,423	133,349
Tasmania	3,325	37,973
Northern Territory	1,190	11,591
Australian Capital Territory	3,346	18,169

**Table 56. Females who have experienced violence by a partner by state of usual residence.**

State of Usual Residence	Violence witnessed by children	Violence not witnessed by children	Do not know if witnessed by children	No children in their care during the relationship	Not applicable
<i>Current partner violence</i>					
New South Wales	19,874	11,185	1,375	22,943	0
Victoria	9,770	7,980	2,009	17,849	0
Queensland	12,481	6,744	289	13,942	0
South Australia	3,279	2,952	0	6,164	0
Western Australia	4,781	4,007	0	4,634	0
Tasmania	1,463	162	162	1,538	0
Northern Territory	678	169	0	343	0
Australian Capital Territory	2,106	464	0	776	0
<i>Previous partner violence</i>					
New South Wales	122,352	55,197	7,836	115,723	28,228
Victoria	76,465	42,625	5,316	73,529	21,601
Queensland	97,185	51,621	6,662	92,545	21,953
South Australia	36,697	21,595	3,050	34,264	12,329
Western Australia	48,160	25,818	3,092	47,380	8,900
Tasmania	15,452	5,535	1,986	11,205	3,795
Northern Territory	4,548	1,215	0	4,746	1,082
Australian Capital Territory	5,791	4,075	639	5,940	1,724

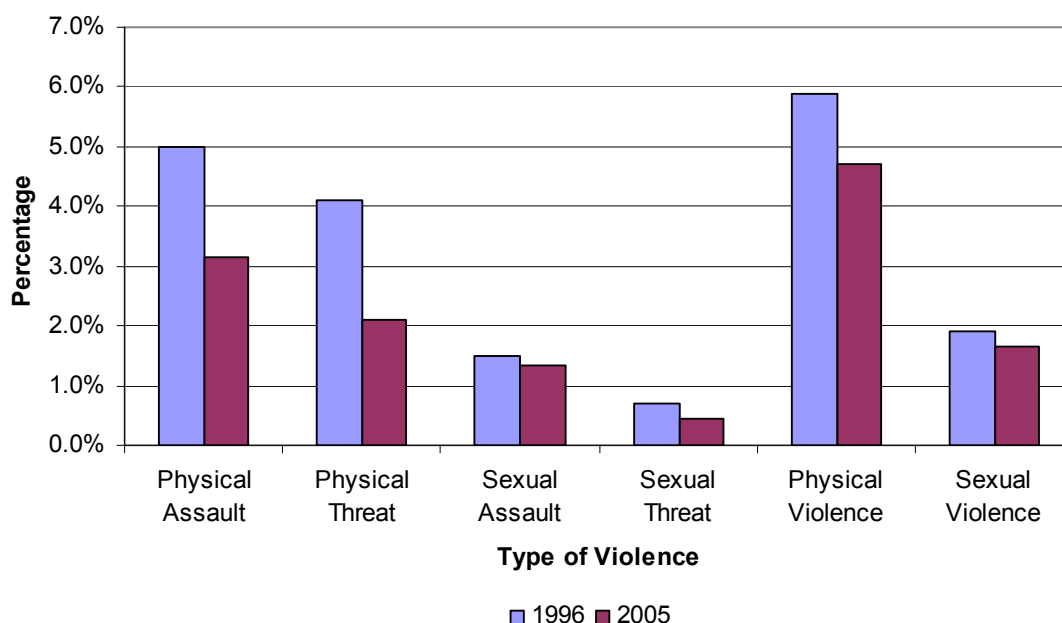
**Table 57. Females who have experienced violence by a partner by state of usual residence and whether the partner violence was witnessed by a child.**

## 7. Comparisons Between the 1996 Women's Safety Survey and the 2005 Personal Safety Survey

In the twelve months prior to the 1996 WSS, an estimated 7.1% of women experienced violence. In comparison, an estimated 5.8% of women experienced violence in the twelve months prior to the 2005 PSS.

A larger proportion of women experienced physical violence in the twelve months prior to the 1996 WSS than women in the twelve months prior to the 2005 PSS:

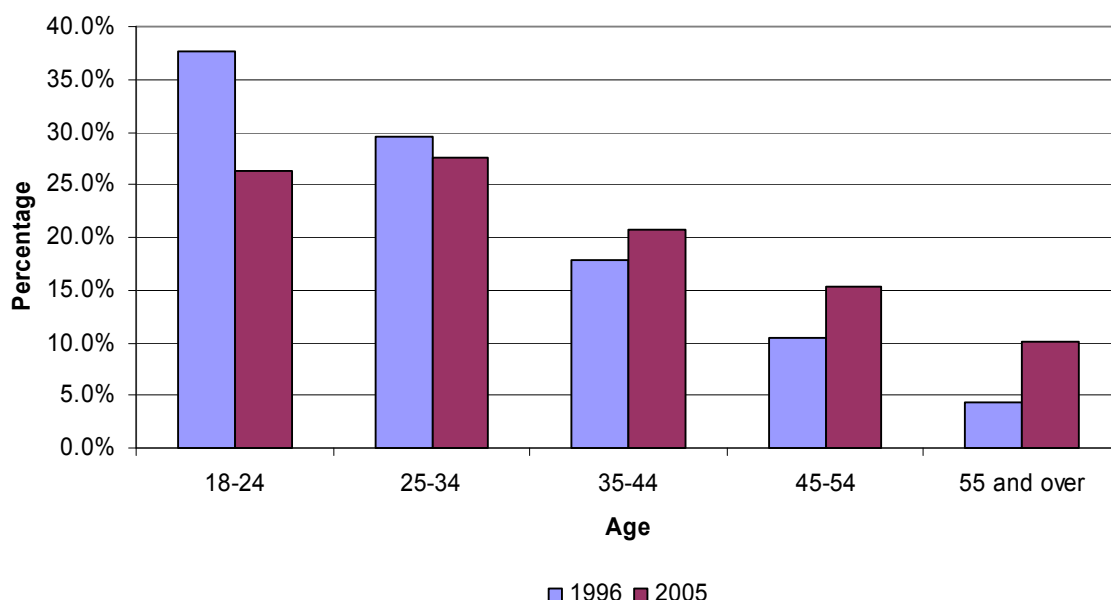
- 5.9% of women experienced physical violence during the twelve months prior to the 1996 survey, compared to 4.7% of women during the twelve months prior to the 2005 survey;
- 5.0% of women experienced physical assault in the twelve months prior to the 1996 survey, compared to 3.1% in the twelve months prior to the 2005 survey;
- 4.1% of women experienced physical attempt or threat in the twelve months prior to the 1996 survey, compared to 2.1% in the twelve months prior to the 2005 survey.



**Figure 50. Comparisons between the 1996 and 2005 survey of women who experienced violence in the twelve months prior to the survey.**

The proportion of women who experienced physical violence in the twelve months prior to the survey has decreased from 1996 to 2005 for women aged less than 35 years and increased from the 1996 survey to the 2005 survey for women aged 45 years and over:

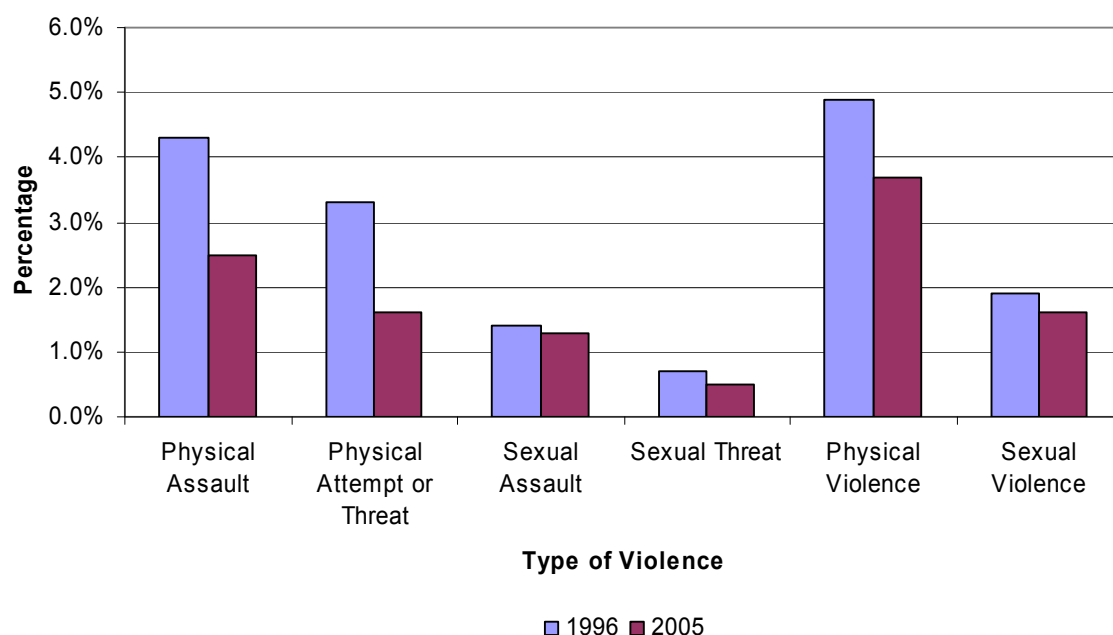
- The proportion of women aged 18-24 years has decreased from 37.7% in the 1996 survey to 26.1% in the 2005 survey;
- The proportion of women aged 25-34 years has decreased from 29.6% in the 1996 survey to 27.5% in the 2005 survey;
- The proportion of women aged 45 years and over has increased from 14.9% in the 1996 survey to 25.4% in the 2005 survey.



**Figure 51. Comparisons between the 1996 and 2005 survey of women who experienced physical violence in the twelve months prior to the survey by age.**

In the twelve months prior to the 1996 WSS, women experienced higher rates of physical violence by a male perpetrator than women in the twelve months prior to the 2005 PSS:

- 4.3% of women experienced physical assault from a male perpetrator during the twelve months prior to the 1996 survey, compared to 2.5% of women in the twelve months prior to the 2005 survey;
- 3.3% of women experienced physical attempt or threat from a male perpetrator during the twelve months prior to the 1996 survey, compared to 1.6% of women in the twelve months prior to the 2005 survey.



**Figure 52. Comparisons between the 1996 and 2005 survey of women who experienced violence by a male perpetrator in the twelve months prior to the survey.**

An estimated 55% of women who experienced physical assault by a male perpetrator in the twelve months prior to the 2005 PSS were physically injured. In contrast, an estimated 48% of women who experienced physical assault by a male perpetrator in the twelve months prior to the 1996 WSS were physically injured.

A larger proportion of women who experienced violence in the twelve months prior to the survey in 2005 reported their incidence of violence to the police, compared to the women who experienced violence in the twelve months prior to the 1996 WSS.

- 36% of women that experienced physical assault by a male perpetrator in the twelve months prior to the 2005 survey told Police, compared to women who experienced physical assault by a male perpetrator in the twelve months prior to the 1996 survey (21.3% told Police);
- 19% of women that experienced sexual assault by a male perpetrator in the twelve months prior to the 2005 survey told Police, compared to women that experienced sexual assault by a male perpetrator in the twelve months prior to the 1996 survey (14.9% told Police);

Women from the 2005 survey who experienced violence by their current partner were more likely to have separated from their partner (37.1%) compared to women from the 1996 survey who experienced current partner violence (29.5% had separated).

A larger proportion of women from the 1996 survey who were pregnant during the relationship with their previous partner experienced violence during their



pregnancy (41.7%) than women from the 2005 survey who were pregnant during the relationship with their previous partner (35.9% experienced violence during their pregnancy).

Women from the 2005 survey who separated from their previous partner were less likely to experience violence during their separation (21.5%) than women from the 1996 survey who separated from their previous partner (35.1% experienced violence during their separation).

## **8. Issues Regarding Comparisons**

In some instances, results cannot be compared between the 1996 WSS and the 2005 PSS due to the differences that exist in the wording of selected questions. Furthermore, restrictions on the nature of the data available from the ABS through its Remote Access Data Laboratory (RADL) and Confidentialised Unit Record File (CURF) make it impossible to collapse or expand categories of survey questions to make results from both surveys comparable. Examples of these issues are outlined below.

### **8.1.1 Educational Attainment**

In the WSS, post-school qualifications are divided into the categories of “Degree or higher”, “Diploma”, “Vocational qualification” and “Other” whilst the remaining responses are considered to be “Without post-school qualifications”. However, it is unclear exactly which responses are assigned to the “Other” category and which are assigned to the “Without post-school qualifications”. Thus the categories within the WSS cannot be accurately matched to the categories within the PSS.

### **8.1.2 Location of Incident**

In the WSS the category “In a home” may consist of the respondent’s home, the perpetrator’s home or another person’s home. In the PSS, separate categories are allocated for the respondent’s home and the perpetrator’s home yet another person’s home is included in the “Other” category. Also, sporting venues are included in the “Outside” category in the WSS. However, in the PSS the category of “Sporting venue” consists of playing fields, stadiums and sporting grounds and is consequently included in the “Other “ category” rather than the “Outside” category.

### **8.1.3 Involvement of Alcohol**

In the WSS, the respondent was only asked if alcohol contributed to the incident whereas the PSS asked if alcohol or any other substance contributed. Whilst more specific responses were recorded separately in the PSS for alcohol and for another substance, the ABS only provided information that combined these responses.

#### 8.1.4 Number of Perpetrators

The definition of the number of perpetrators is not identical for the WSS and PSS. The WSS collected the number of types of perpetrators, both male and female, that had been violent toward the respondent in each of their most recent incident of violence by each type of perpetrator. In contrast, the PSS collected the number of perpetrators that were involved in a single incident.

## 8.2 Detailed Tables

Socio-demographic Characteristics of Women	1996 Women's Safety Survey (b)							2005 Personal Safety Survey						
	Physical Violence		Sexual Violence		Total(c)		Total women in each group(d)	Physical Violence		Sexual Violence		Total(c)		Total women in each group(d)
	1000s	rate(e)	1000s	rate(e)	1000s	rate(e)	1000s	1000s	rate(e)	1000s	rate(e)	1000s	rate(e)	1000s
<b>Age Group (years)</b>														
18-24	152.5	16.1	43.6	4.6	178.5	18.9	945.2	94.8	10.0	38.0	4.0	116.2	12.3	944.9
25-34	119.6	8.3	42.1	2.9	144.2	10.0	1,440.2	99.9	7.1	38.3	2.7	121.8	8.7	1,404.4
35-44	71.9	5.2	31.5	2.3	94.2	6.8	1,376.3	76.1	5.1	31.0	2.1	98.8	6.6	1,498.4
45-54	42.5	3.6	*10.4	*0.9	50.1	4.3	1,166.6	56.9	4.1	12.5	0.9	66.4	4.7	1,400.1
55 and over	*18	*0.9	*5.5	*0.3	23.4	1.2	1,952.2	35.2	1.4	6.3	0.3	40.6	1.7	2,445.2
<b>All Age Groups</b>	<b>404.4</b>	<b>5.9</b>	<b>133.1</b>	<b>1.9</b>	<b>490.4</b>	<b>7.1</b>	<b>6,880.5</b>	<b>363.0</b>	<b>4.7</b>	<b>126.1</b>	<b>1.6</b>	<b>443.8</b>	<b>5.8</b>	<b>7,693.1</b>
<b>Birthplace</b>														
Born in Australia	330.0	6.5	113.5	2.2	399.3	7.9	5,083.1	300.5	5.3	101.9	1.8	363.2	6.4	5,651.6
Born Outside Australia														
Main English speaking country	37.8	4.9	*9.5	*1.2	45.1	5.8	778.8	31.2	4.0	11.5	1.5	40.0	5.1	784.5
Other Country	36.6	3.6	*10.1	*1	46.0	4.5	1,018.7	31.2	2.5	12.7	1.0	40.6	3.2	1257
Total	74.4	4.1	*19.6	*1.1	91.1	5.1	1,797.4	62.4	3.1	24.2	1.2	80.6	3.9	2,041.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>404.4</b>	<b>5.9</b>	<b>133.1</b>	<b>1.9</b>	<b>490.4</b>	<b>7.1</b>	<b>6,880.5</b>	<b>363.0</b>	<b>4.7</b>	<b>126.1</b>	<b>1.6</b>	<b>443.8</b>	<b>5.8</b>	<b>7,693.1</b>
<b>Labour Force Status</b>														
Employed														
Working full-time	1,252.6	6.5	39.8	2.1	152.5	7.9	1,936.1	124.5	5.3	33.7	1.4	146.3	6.2	2,343.9
Working part-time	122.6	7.2	42.1	2.5	150.8	8.8	1,706.4	114.8	5.5	40.2	1.9	140.3	6.8	2,070.9
Total	248.4	6.8	81.9	2.2	303.3	8.3	3,642.5	239.3	5.4	73.9	1.7	286.6	6.5	4,414.8
Unemployed	31.3	11.5	*18.1	*6.6	43.7	16.1	272.5	29.7	14.7	8.1	4.0	32.5	16.1	202.2
Not in the Labour Force	124.8	4.2	33.1	1.1	143.4	4.8	2,965.6	94.0	3.1	44.1	1.4	124.8	4.1	3,076.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>404.4</b>	<b>5.9</b>	<b>133.1</b>	<b>1.9</b>	<b>490.4</b>	<b>7.1</b>	<b>6,880.5</b>	<b>363.0</b>	<b>4.7</b>	<b>126.1</b>	<b>1.6</b>	<b>443.8</b>	<b>5.8</b>	<b>7,693.1</b>

**Table 58. Women who have experienced violence in the last twelve months by demographics**

(a) Includes violence by a male and/or female perpetrator.

(b) Sourced from ABS Women's Safety Australia 1996 Cat No. 4128.0

(c) Includes women who did not experience violence.

(d) If a woman experienced both physical and sexual violence she was only counted once in the total.

(e) Rate per 100 women in the relevant population. See last column for the numbers of women in each group.

Experience of violence	1996 Women's Safety Survey (a)						2005 Personal Safety Survey					
	Male Perpetrator		Female Perpetrator		Total (b)		Male Perpetrator		Female Perpetrator		Total (b)	
	1000s	%	1000s	%	1000s	%	1000s	%	1000s	%	1000s	%
Not experienced	6,450.6	93.8	6,769.8	98.4	6,390.1	92.9	7,317.1	95.1	7,563.6	98.3	7,249.4	94.2
Experienced												
Physical Violence												
Physical Assault	293.5	4.3	84.3	1.2	346.9	5.0	195.3	2.5	66.5	0.9	242.0	3.1
Attempt or threat	228.1	3.3	88.8	1.3	284.0	4.1	122.6	1.6	60.2	0.8	162.4	2.1
Total (c)	338.7	4.9	109.1	1.6	404.4	5.9	287.7	3.7	123.4	1.6	363.0	4.7
Sexual Violence												
Sexual Assault	98.4	1.4	**	**	100.0	1.5	101.1	1.3	**	**	101.6	1.3
Threat	44.8	0.7	**	**	44.8	0.7	34.9	0.5	0.0	0.0	34.9	0.5
Total (c)	132.3	1.9	**	**	133.1	1.9	125.5	1.6	**	**	126.1	1.6
Total (d)	429.9	6.2	110.7	1.6	490.4	7.1	376.0	4.9	129.5	1.7	443.8	5.8
<b>Total Women</b>	<b>6,880.5</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>6,880.5</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>6,880.5</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>7,693.1</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>7,693.1</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>7,693.1</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 59. Women who have experienced violence in the last twelve months by gender of perpetrator**

(a) Sourced from ABS Women's Safety Australia 1996 Cat No. 4128.0

(b) If a woman experienced violence by both a male and a female perpetrator she was only counted once in the total.

(c) If a woman experienced more than one type of violence she was only counted once in the total.

(d) If a woman experienced both physical and sexual violence she was only counted once in the total.

Whether Physically Injured	1996 Women's Safety Survey (a)						2005 Personal Safety Survey					
	Male Perpetrator			Female Perpetrator			Male Perpetrator			Female Perpetrator		
	Physical Assault		Sexual Assault		Physical Assault		Physical Assault		Sexual Assault		Physical Assault	
	1000s	%	1000s	%	1000s	%	1000s	%	1000s	%	1000s	%
Not physically injured	152.6	52.0	76.4	77.6	45.6	54.1	88.4	45.3	73.7	72.9	36.0	54.1
Physically injured												
Bruised	134.3	45.8	*21.4	*21.7	35.7	42.4	94.7	48.5	23.9	23.6	25.1	37.7
Cut	32.8	11.2			*5.6	*6.6	19.6	10.0	4.3	4.3	5.6	8.4
Scratched	31.0	10.6	**3.5	**3.5	*6.3	*7.5	22.1	11.3	2.4	2.4	9.4	14.1
Other(b)	27.5	9.4	*5.6	*5.7	*6.4	*7.6	22.3	11.4	5.1	5.0	6.3	9.5
Total(c)	140.9	48.0	**22	**22.4	38.7	45.9	106.8	54.7	27.3	27.0	30.5	45.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>293.5</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>774.2</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>383.1</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>195.3</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>101.1</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>66.5</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 60. Women who have experienced assault in the last twelve months by whether physically injured**

(a) Sourced from ABS Women's Safety Australia 1996 Cat No. 4128.0

(b) Includes fractured or broken bones or teeth, penetrative injuries, stab or gun wounds, miscarriage and other injuries.

(c) If a woman reported more than one type of injury she was only counted once in the total.

Whether police told	1996 Women's Safety Survey (a)		2005 Personal Safety Survey	
	During the last twelve months		During the last twelve months	
	1000s	%	1000s	%
<b>Physical Assault</b>				
Police not told	230.8	78.7	124.9	64.0
Police told(b)	62.7	21.3	70.4	36.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>293.5</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>195.3</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Sexual Assault</b>				
Police not told	83.8	85.1	82.0	81.1
Police told(b)	*14.7	*14.9	19.1	18.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>98.4</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>101.1</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 61. Women who have experienced assault by a man in the last twelve months by whether police told**

(a) Sourced from ABS Women's Safety Australia 1996 Cat No. 4128.0

(b) Includes police told by woman or someone else.

Relationship to Perpetrator	1996 Women's Safety Survey (a)			2005 Personal Safety Survey		
	During the Last twelve months			During the Last twelve months		
	Police Told(b)	Total(c)		Police Told(b)	Total(c)	
	1000s	rate(d)	1000s	1000s	rate(d)	1000s
<b>Physical Assault</b>						
Current Partner	*5.6	*6.3	89.6	5.2	17.0	30.5
Previous Partner	24.6	34.6	71.3	26.0	61.0	42.6
Boyfriend/date	**	**	22.8	8.4	24.3	34.5
Other known man	*11.3	*17.4	65.1	19.8	35.9	55.1
Stranger	*9.8	*21.9	44.6	10.9	33.5	32.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>54.4</b>	<b>18.6</b>	<b>293.5</b>	<b>70.4</b>	<b>36.0</b>	<b>195.3</b>
<b>Sexual Assault</b>						
Current Partner	0.0	0.0	*9.9	0.0	0.0	7.8
Previous Partner	**3.8	**25.1	*15	4.1	20.7	19.8
Boyfriend/date	0.0	0.0	*21.6	3.9	30.2	12.9
Other known man	*4.3	*12.2	34.9	7.2	15.5	46.5
Stranger	**4.0	**23.3	*17	3.9	27.9	14.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>14.7</b>	<b>14.9</b>	<b>98.4</b>	<b>19.1</b>	<b>18.9</b>	<b>101.1</b>

**Table 62. Women who have experienced assault by a man by relationship to perpetrator by whether police told**

(a) Sourced from ABS Women's Safety Australia 1996 Cat No. 4128.0

(b) Includes only women who told the police themselves.

(c) Includes women who did not tell the police.

(d) Rate per 100 women who experienced assault by each perpetrator group.

Socio-demographic Characteristics of Women	1996 Women's Safety Survey (a)								2005 Personal Safety Survey							
	Physical Assault				Sexual Assault				Physical Assault				Sexual Assault			
	Police not told %	Police told (b) %	Total %	Total 1000s	Police not told %	Police told (b) %	Total %	Total 1000s	Police not told %	Police told (b) %	Total %	Total 1000s	Police not told %	Police told (b) %	Total %	Total 1000s
<b>Age Group (years)</b>																
18-24	84.8	*15.3	100.0	113.2	89.2	**10.8	100.0	33.9	81.7	18.3	100.0	47.1	79.1	20.6	100.0	28.7
25-34	74.9	25.1	100.0	88.8	*80.7	*19.3	100.0	27.0	54.8	45.4	100.0	70.1	83.2	16.8	100.0	29.1
35-44	81.8	*18.2	100.0	48.2	88.5	**11.5	100.0	27.6	64.9	35.3	100.0	36.8	77.5	22.9	100.0	25.8
45-54	85.9	**14.1	100.0	28.5	*73.6	**	100.0	*5.9	61.2	38.8	100.0	27.3	78.8	21.2	100.0	11.3
55 and over	*85.6	**	100.0	*14.8	0.0	**	100.0	**4.0	53.2	46.0	100.0	13.9	100.0	0.0	100.0	6.1
<b>All Age Groups</b>	<b>81.4</b>	<b>18.6</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>293.5</b>	<b>85.1</b>	<b>14.9</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>98.4</b>	<b>64.0</b>	<b>36.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>195.3</b>	<b>81.1</b>	<b>18.9</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>101.1</b>

**Table 63. Women who have experienced assault by a man during the last twelve months by age by whether police told**

(a) Sourced from ABS Women's Safety Australia 1996 Cat No. 4128.0

(b) Includes only women who told the police themselves.

<b>Whether Separated</b>	<i>1996 Women's Safety Survey (b)</i>		<i>2005 Personal Safety Survey</i>	
	<b>1000s</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>1000s</b>	<b>%</b>
Have Separated	101.8	29.5	59.4	37.1
Have Not Separated				
Did not want to separate	105.6	30.6	39.6	24.7
Wanted to separate	137.9	39.9	61.1	38.2
<i>Total</i>	<i>243.6</i>	<i>70.5</i>	<i>100.7</i>	<i>62.9</i>
<b>Total</b>	<b>345.4</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>160.1</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 64. Women who have experienced violence by their current partner during the relationship by whether they have separated (a)**

(a) Separation refers to those occasions when a woman left her partner and then returned.

(b) Sourced from ABS Women's Safety Australia 1996 Cat No. 4128.0

<b>Experience of Violence</b>	<i>1996 Women's Safety Survey (a)</i>		<i>2005 Personal Safety Survey</i>	
	<b>1000s</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>1000s</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>During Pregnancy</b>				
Violence did not occur during pregnancy	409.1	58.3	428.1	64.1
Violence occurred during pregnancy				
Violence did not occur for the first time during pregnancy	147.2	21.0	122.1	18.3
Violence occurred for the first time during pregnancy	140.3	20.0	112	16.8
<i>Total(b)</i>	<i>292.1</i>	<i>41.7</i>	<i>239.8</i>	<i>35.9</i>
<b>Total Women who were pregnant during relationship</b>	<b>701.2</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>667.9</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>During Separation(c)</b>				
Violence did not occur while separated	314.0	64.9	410.0	78.5
Violence occurred while separated	169.7	35.1	112.6	21.5
<b>Total Women Who Separated</b>	<b>483.7</b>	<b>48.1</b>	<b>522.6</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 65. Women who have experienced violence by a previous partner during the relationship by the experience of violence during pregnancy and separation**

(a) Sourced from ABS Women's Safety Australia 1996 Cat No. 4128.0

(b) Includes women who did not know if violence occurred for the first time during pregnancy.

(c) Separation refers to those occasions when a woman left her partner and then returned. It does not refer to the final separation.



Whether Children Witnessed Violence	1996 Women's Safety Survey (b)				2005 Personal Safety Survey			
	Current Partner		Previous Partner(c)		Current Partner		Previous Partner(c)	
	1000s	%	1000s	%	1000s	%	1000s	%
No children in their care during the relationship	133.8	38.7	324.0	32.2	68.2	42.6	385.3	37.5
Children in their care during the relationship								
Violence not witnessed by children	69.6	20.2	193.6	19.2	33.7	21.0	207.7	20.2
Violence witnessed by children	132.4	38.3	461.2	45.8	54.4	34.0	406.7	39.6
Do not know if witnessed by children	*9.6	*2.8	27.4	2.7	3.8	2.4	28.5	2.8
Total	211.6	61.3	682.2	67.8	91.9	57.4	642.9	62.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>345.4</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>1006.2</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>160.1</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>1028.2</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 66. Women who have experienced violence by a partner during the relationship(a) by whether children witnessed violence**

(a) A woman could have experienced violence by both a current and a previous partner.

(b) Sourced from ABS Women's Safety Australia 1996 Cat No. 4128.0

(c) Excludes women whose partner was violent only after the relationship ended. If a woman experienced violence by more than one previous partner, this relates to the last partner who was violent.

## **9. Conclusions**

Violence frequently has ongoing effects, impacting on victims' physical and mental health, as well as many aspects of their day to day life (WHO 2005, Vic Health 2004). In addition to the social costs of violence, the economic costs are high. Partner violence is a major contributor to ill-health and premature death in young women (WHO 2005, Vic Health 2004), and lost work time resulting from domestic violence has also been estimated to cost the Australian economy millions of dollars each year (see Carrington and Phillips for a review of the costs of domestic violence).

This report has detailed a number of aspects of physical and sexual violence. The survey gathered data from over 17,000 women and men about their experiences of violence, as adults, during childhood, and in the twelve months prior to the survey. Population estimates were derived from the survey results. The results show prevalence rates for different forms of violence across different segments of the community, as well as examining the role of alcohol/drugs in violence, the impact of violence on victims lives, and the prevalence of partner violence being witnessed by children or occurring during pregnancy.

### *Violence in the Community*

The findings show that violence is a common occurrence. In the twelve months prior to the PSS, 5.8% of women and 10.8% of men experienced violence. Over a lifetime, these percentages are much higher. Consistent with other studies, it was found that men are at greatest risk from strangers, while women are at greatest risk from people they know, often current or previous intimate partners. Alcohol and drugs were considered by respondents to contribute to the majority of stranger violence, and also contributed to a significant portion of violence by people known to the victim. It is important to address the prevalence of violence, which is known to have high social and economic costs.

### *Impact of Violence*

Violence affected the respondents' physical and emotional well-being. In addition to physical injuries sustained by some victims, violence also affected feelings of safety, and impacted on aspects of life such as eating/sleeping, social and leisure activities, home security and work or studies due to fear and anxiety or physical injuries.

### *Partner Violence*

In total, 160,118 women (2%) had experienced violence by their current partner, and 1,127,853 (15%) women had experienced violence by a previous partner. When women sustained serious injuries resulting from violence, the perpetrator was most often a partner (previous or current).

Unfortunately the impact of partner violence is extending to another generation. Partner violence was reported to be witnessed by children by over 400,000 women who had experienced previous partner violence, and over 50,000 women who had experienced violence by their current partner. One quarter of all women who had experienced violence by a previous partner experienced violence during pregnancy. Exposure to violence during childhood is linked to a multitude of adverse physical, social and psychological outcomes for children, as well as increasing their risk of being a victim or perpetrator of violence in adulthood. The most common reason for women staying in a relationship in which children had witnessed violence was having no money/financial support (37%). One in six had nowhere to go.

There is clearly a need to find ways to assist women to be able to leave a violent relationship. As well as intervention strategies, preventative strategies are an important factor in addressing partner violence.

### *Support and Services*

Less than one in three victims of violence (in the last twelve months) reported the incident to the police. Of women who did not report the violence they had experienced to the police, 19% of physical assault victims and 10% of sexual assault victims did not tell the police after the most recent incident as they did not think that the police could/would do anything.

A restraining / violence order was taken out by 10% of women who had experienced current partner violence, and 25% of women who had experienced previous partner violence. Of women who had taken a restraining / violence order against a partner, 20% of current partner violence victims and 42% of previous partner violence victims experienced further incidents of violence after the order was issued.

Many victims of violence do not seek help following the violence. Only 7% of men and 19% of women accessed professional help. Similarly, around 80% of women who had experienced sexual or physical assault did not access services (such as crisis help, legal help, financial services and other services including telephone help lines).

Most female victims of violence talked to friends/neighbours or family about the violence, although they were much less likely to talk to family about sexual violence compared to physical violence. One in five (20%) of women who had been sexually assaulted did not talk to anyone about the incident.

*Addressing the Issue of Violence*

Given the high costs of violence to the victims and to society, it is vital to continue to develop and improve strategies for addressing violence. There are many causes of violence, and providing effective services/programs for victims/perpetrators and the community in general is a challenging task. Prevention and intervention services targeting community attitudes and behaviours, and providing services for victims and programmes for perpetrators of violence are an important part of addressing issues of violence within the community. Further research is also important, in order to measure changes and gain a deeper understanding of the causes of violence and what can be done to reduce levels of violence.

## 10. Recommendations for Further Research

The area of violence is a large and complex research topic. There are many types of violence (e.g. sexual assault, physical assault, harassment etc), violence by different types of perpetrators (a partner, a family member, a stranger) and victims vary in their demographic characteristics and history. There are also many situational aspects, such as whether the violence occurred during separation or whether alcohol/drugs were involved. Furthermore, the research can focus on victims, perpetrators, children of victims, causal factors, effects of violence, coping with violence, or accessing and effectiveness of services. Approaches can include collection and analysis of quantitative or qualitative data or be based on reviewing existing research literature.

The present report encompasses many issues that were covered in the PSS, however, with the huge amount of information gathered on a wide range of topics, it is by no means exhaustive. In preparing and discussing the report, a number of issues stood out as important areas to investigate further:

- The conflict associated with separation and children's residency issues is widely thought to create a high-risk time, and this is supported by other research we have conducted in this area. The PSS analysis showing high numbers of children witnessing previous partner domestic violence and the amount of violence that begins after separation suggests a potential area for further exploration of PSS data to drill down as much as possible into the potential Family Law client group.
- Many PSS respondents indicated that they do not access various services because they think they can deal with it themselves. It would be worthwhile to investigate how well victims of violence who think they are able to deal with their experiences of violence themselves actually do deal with it. This issue could best be explored through longitudinal research.
- Many of the responses in relation to accessing support and services and reasons for leaving or returning to a partner who has been violent fell into the category of "Other" when accessing the data via the RADL. In some of the analyses "Other" was the most common reason, which clearly limits interpretation of the issues involved. For some questions this was due to collapsing of data categories available in the RADL to maintain confidentiality but the information would still be contained in the ABS dataset. For other questions, more detailed information may not have been collected. The following options may assist in understanding victims' decision-making in these important issues more clearly:
  - Further information may be available directly from the ABS;
  - Future data collections could gather more complete qualitative data (provided that these will be analysed by the ABS or be available to other researchers);
  - Other qualitative surveys could be undertaken; or

- Existing research looking at these issues could be relied upon.
- A big issue is as to why women abused in childhood are at a much greater risk of experiencing partner violence in adulthood. It is unlikely that a single clear cut answer has been found to this question, but a literature review of psychological and social research literature (Australian and International) would provide information outlining suggested causal pathways and the amount of evidence supporting these. It is possible this may also highlight potential ways of “breaking the cycle” for some victims.
- Alcohol/drugs was indicated by victims to be a major contributor to violence. This issue could be further drilled down in the PSS data.

Other researchers or experts in the field may identify many other research questions relating to specific policy or service provider issues. In addition, there are a number of issues that were beyond the scope of the PSS, but warrant further attention. For instance, the PSS focuses primarily on the victims’ experiences of violence, however it is also important to consider issues around perpetrators of violence and practical steps in dealing with violence such as the effectiveness of various services, programs and campaigns. In addition, as a household survey, the PSS excludes a number of high-risk groups, such as women in refuges or remote communities. . It would be useful to collect data for these high risk groups, perhaps by a targeted survey. There is also scope to make comparisons between the PSS results and data from Justice, Family Courts, other agencies and service providers.

## 10.1 Suggestions for Methodology

In conducting the PSS, the ABS has achieved a large sample data collection covering a wide range of issues. It would be advantageous to maintain comparability of the data in future years if the survey is run again. However, there may be scope to achieve a better return on the effort that goes into collecting data from such a large sample.

- Longitudinal data collection from certain groups (such as those who had experienced partner violence, those who had experienced violence in the last 12 months or higher risk groups) would allow greater understanding of many issues, such as when and whether separation occurs, whether the violence ends and coping, among others. Longitudinal research would reduce the reliance on recollection of events that may have happened a long time ago, and allow tracking of a number of issues over time.

One of the biggest challenges in undertaking a longitudinal survey of this type is accessing respondents in the target group (eg victims of violence), given that, for example, 6% of women have experienced violence in the last 12 months. Therefore, surveying 10,000 women could be expected to produce data from approximately 600 who had recently experienced violence. This can result in an expensive and inefficient method of recruiting the required sample size if conducted on its own. However, as this group can be located and identified through running a large scale survey which has broader research aims, such as the PSS, this can be a very efficient method of identifying women in the target group who can then be recruited into a longitudinal study. Following up the selected groups is likely to be a much smaller undertaking than the PSS, as the decision could be made to follow up on only perhaps 600, or 1000 respondents who fell within the group/s of interest.

- The coded data on victims' reasons for leaving or returning to a relationship, for accessing various services and supports and for not reporting to the police could be improved to reduce the number of "Other" responses in order to better understand the factors driving this decision-making. Qualitative or coded data has an important role to play in understanding the reasoning behind certain facts and figures. Increasing the information available in these areas is therefore central to understanding how people who have experienced violence think and feel about the choices they make in the aftermath of violence, what they need, why certain behaviours occur and how to influence behaviours of perpetrators and victims of violence.

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